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A HOME WEEKLY

FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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THE TALE OF THE STREETS.

BY E. F. BEADLE.

I read, in the crowded city,
A story strange and wild,
Of hearts that are hard and selfish,
By sin and self-defiled;
Of souls that are sold for mammon,
Of love that is thrown away,
And I shudder at this sad story,
As I read it day by day.

I read of hearts that are aching
For a love that would save from sin—
Of souls that are sick with sorrow,
In the city's dust and din;
Of hearts that are praying vainly
For a little time of rest,
From the wearisome burden of living,
And the pain that is unconfessed.

I read in wan, white faces
Of women that I meet,
A yearning for something better,
As they wander down the street;
Of lives they are daily leading,
Going down in the depths of sin,
And my heart is full of pity
For the homeless Madelon.

And I read, in the faces of others,
A scorn for the weak and poor,
From the heights of their self-deemed good-
ness.

They pity their kin no more,
O, I shiver in pain and pity
As I read, in the toil and din,
This story of griefs and longings,
Of pomp, and pride, and sin.

Idaho Tom,

THE YOUNG OUTLAW OF SILVERLAND;
OR,
The Hunters of the Wild West.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE
BEN," "RED ROB," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE LOFT.

It was a moment of extreme suspense and anxiety to Idaho Tom, as he sat there in the darkness of the loft, fearing almost to breathe lest he told the unknown foe, if foe he was, where to strike. The sound was so very faint that he could not tell exactly the direction from whence it came. He was cognizant of the terrible fact, however, that it was coming closer and closer each moment.

Was it a friend of the trapper's who had been concealed in the loft or was it a savage, who had gained an entrance through the roof before Tom took his position above?

These questions the youth propounded to himself, and, as if in answer to his last question, a tomahawk whizzed past his head, and sunk deep in the wall behind him. It had been aimed at his head, but in the darkness the assassin had aimed an inch wide of his mark.

Tom raised his revolver and fired at the unknown foe, but he, too, missed the mark. The flash of his weapon, however, told his exact location. A figure sprang across the room, and grappled with him. It was that of an Indian, who uttered a fearful war-whoop, as hand to hand he engaged the youth.

Locked in each other's arms, the foes fell heavily to the floor.

The loose boards rattled and banged on the joists, as the two combatants rolled and bounded in rapid evolutions to and fro across the floor, ever and anon striking the wall with a dull thump and rebounding with a force that shook the cabin to its foundations.

"By the shades of Bunker Hill!" exclaimed old Zedekiah Dee, "the boy's in trouble. A red slug of Satan has got into the loft, and now they're havin' it, nip-and-tuck. Oh, mothers of the Pilgrim Fathers! how I do hope the boy'll come out best! If I only dare leave this door—if I could only boost his dog up stairs, he might be saved. Hurrah up there, Thomas! Scoop the varmint if ye can! Into him teeth and toe-nails—fist and foot! Give him a sample of Bunker Hill, Tippecanoe and old Seventy-Six, too! Show him that you're a son of ole Hail Columby Happy Land, and—"

The trapper's words were here cut short by a renewed attack upon the door by the foe without, which lasted for several minutes. But failing to force an entrance, the enemy again became quiet—renewing the attack at intervals.

The fight still went on in the loft. Still Zedekiah Dee dare not leave the door. The blows of the enemy were liable to jar the bolts and bars from their places, in which case an easy entrance would be afforded to the overwhelming numbers of the foe.

Eagerly and in dire suspense the old trapper waited the result of the conflict above, his own life depending on the success of Idaho Tom. He could still hear the foe rebounding across the floor. The boards rattled and clashed with a terrific sound. The cabin fairly trembled under the violent movements of the two foes in the loft, and the blows of the tomahawks without. The clanking started from the walls, and a stifling cloud of dust pervaded the room.

A sound like the dripping of water was suddenly heard during a momentary lull in the din of battle.

The trapper shuddered when he discovered a little scarlet stream trickling through a crack between two loft boards and spattering on the floor below.

It was blood; one of the combatants had been wounded, and at such a rate must be fast bleeding to death. But which one's life-blood was it? Tom's or his adversary's? Zedekiah had no idea.



The tufted head and blood-stained face of a savage appeared just below the loft floor.

Still the struggle went on. Here and there blood would spurt through the floor as the combatants changed position.

The young outlaw's hand howled piteously, reared upon the ladder, and made several vain attempts to clamber up into the loft.

At length the struggling grew less violent. The blows fell feebly—the groans scarcely audible. Finally the struggle ceased altogether. The battle ended, but which of the two had won? Had either, or had both been slain?

The old borderman was in a greater dilemma now than ever. In two or three places blood trickled through the loft floor with an ominous drip, drip; while not a sound could be heard above.

The trapper's situation was one of extreme peril. He was satisfied that Tom had been slain, and the savages could easily gain admission now by way of the roof, which virtually placed him between two fires. Had his friend escaped, the two might have held out until assistance came to their relief; but now the prospect for his escape looked gloomy.

In the midst of the old man's deep and painful cogitations, something stirred in the loft!—one of the combatants was dragging himself toward the head of the stairs!

The old trapper could hold his silence no longer, and in an eager, excited tone cried out: "Thomas, Idaho Thomas! are you alive, boy? For God's sake, speak out! What's trumps, boy?"

There was no response.

Still that dragging noise continued above.

The old borderman repeated his call: "Boy, is it you?—are you dead?"

As if in answer, the tufted head and blood-stained face of a savage appeared just below the loft floor at the head of the stairs, and there pausing, fixed a pair of searching, glaring eyes upon the face of the Mad Trapper.

"Great Lord of Israel!" burst in involuntary accents from the lips of the old borderman, "Tom is dead!"

CHAPTER VI.

A JOKE ON ZEDEKIAH.

For a moment the Wild Trapper stood motionless as a statue, gazing at the savage face peering down upon him from the loft. There was something so horrible in the red-skin's ghastly visage and sinister eyes that he could not resist their fascination. But, acting under the impulse of the moment, he drew a pistol, and, before the red-skin could withdraw his face, fired upon him. But the evil face was not withdrawn then, nor did a sound escape the lips.

The trapper saw a little scarlet spot appear on the red-skin's forehead, from which oozed drops of blood. It was where the trapper's bullet had struck.

And simultaneous with this discovery, there came the sound of loud, suppressed laughter from the loft. Zedekiah paused, held his breath and listened.

The sound grew louder and louder, and finally developed into an easy, rollicking strain of laughter.

The trapper's face grew red and pale by turns. A smile of joy passed over his face, then he bit his lips as if to keep back an outburst of sudden rage. But the better nature of the fun-loving old man prevailed, and he, too, burst into a peal of hearty laughter.

The old borderman had been the victim of a ghastly joke. Idaho Tom lived; he had slain the savage and dragged the body to the top of the ladder, and there placed the head in such

a position as would make it appear that the warrior was peering down upon the trapper.

"You young devil-catcher!" roared the trapper, "come right down here, and I'll kick, beat, pound the stuffin' outen you. You're an imposition on humanity—a gigantic fraud—a cheat, a swindle! Come down, I say, and let me congratulate you on your victory—come along, I say!"

With a smile upon his handsome face, Idaho Tom descended the ladder. He bore many frightful marks of the conflict in the loft. His face was cut and bleeding in many places, and his clothing hung almost in shreds upon him. None of his wounds, however, were serious, the sharp nails of the warrior having been the only weapon used upon him.

"I'm in the best plight, friend trapper," the youth said, "as you very doubtless see."

"Well, yes, I see your clothes are sum't s'iled, and yer face is scratched outer kilter, but it's good fur ye; what'd ye skeer me to death for? It's a judgment sent on you. And so one of the varmints got into the loft, eh?"

"Yes, I found one there; and was just in time to prevent the second one from coming in from off the roof. But, friend trapper, what do you think of the situation by this time?"

"Precarious, Thomas; not as pleasant as I have seen it in my lifetime. If the purgatorians once get the bulge on us, why, we'll be immortalized in the wink of a lightning-flash. But I'm in hopes, Idaho, that—"

His words were interrupted by the fulfillment of his hopes. The clash of rifles without, mingled with shouts of men, told that assistance had come to the besieged.

A yell of triumph pealed from Zedekiah's lips, and opening the door, he rushed out upon the foe.

A short, decisive battle ensued. The gleaming torches of the outlaws told the whites where to strike, while the latter maintained a decided advantage by keeping under cover of the gloom.

Molock and his surviving companions were put to rout. They dashed their torches aside, and sought safety in the fastnesses of the overshadowing mountain.

With a shout of triumph, half a dozen men rushed from their concealment and approached the cabin, rifles in hand. Zedekiah Dee greeted them in the warmest manner.

Some of these men were dressed in the garbs of hunters, others as miners; yet none of them were of the uncouth appearance of Dee himself.

The first to enter the cabin was a youth of about fifteen, clad in a neat, picturesque suit of a hunter. His hair was of light brown, long and wavy; his eyes of a dark-blue color, and sparkling with youthful fervor, and his complexion clear and fair as a maiden's.

"Oh, uncle Zed!" the lad cried, rushing up to the old borderman, "you are safe—unhurt."

"Ya-as, Albert, my boy," drawled the trapper, laying his brawny hand upon the youth's head; then turning to Idaho Tom, he continued: "This lad here, Albert, is Idaho Tom, who's stood by me through this hull fight. He's the true stuff, and fights like a wildcat. If it hadn't been for him, the Lord only knows what'd become of my hair."

Albert greeted Tom with a cordial shake of the hand; and the men, strong, sturdy fellows, advanced, one by one, and took the hand of the youth in that warlike, hearty manner so characteristic of the true borderman.

The first thing done, after matters had been explained, was to remove the dead savage and clear away all evidence of the late conflict in the loft.

Idaho Tom washed the blood from his face and hands, and repaired such damages sustained by his clothing as was possible.

Albert went about setting the house in order with the ease and familiarity of one reared to a knowledge of household duties.

Tom watched the youth with that curiosity for which he was remarkable—with which all boys of his age and spirit are naturally endowed. From the moment he set his eyes upon the lad, the face of that fair girl whom he had saved from savage power that day was recalled to his mind. There was, without a single doubt, a strong resemblance between the features of the girl and those of Albert; and taking everything into consideration, especially the hospitable manner in which he had been treated by Dee, he felt satisfied that the trapper knew all about the girl, and that she and Albert were sister and brother.

The young outlaw noted every movement of the lad as he went softly about the room. There was a grace in his movements, a beauty in his soft blue eyes, that held his attention and admiration from the first. Suddenly a startling thought forced itself upon him, and was followed by the conviction that Albert and the girl he had rescued were one and the same.

This was not a pleasant discovery or conviction, and he tried to dismiss the idea from his mind. It is true, he experienced a pleasure in one sense of the word, knowing that he was so near the object, the strange young beauty, that had wrought such an impression upon his mind and heart. But the circumstances under which they met, the secrecy of the maiden's identity, the mysteries involved in the lonely cabin—all had a tendency to fill his mind with a vague suspicion. And that suspicion was of the cabin's being the headquarters of a band of robbers or counterfeiters; and if so, then the floating island on Silver Bay, and that Enchanted Canoe, were, in some manner, connected with their operations.

That the trapper's band and that of Molock were at sword's points was plain enough to Tom; and that the former should extend a protecting hand and the hospitality of their roof to him, in consideration of his services, was natural enough; still Tom could not convince himself that these men were altogether law-abiding regarding the legitimacy of their vocation.

Time and again the youth endeavored to drive from his mind the thought that he loved the fair girl who had been the object of his heroism that day. But, try as he would, the stubborn fact was indelibly stamped upon his heart, and could not be idly thrown aside. The sweet young face, the soft blue eyes, and the sylph-like form—all had made a firm impression upon him. It was a case of love at first sight on his part; and seeing how the matter stood with himself, he resolved to urge his suit as far as he dared—until he knew, at least, that there was no hope for him.

With this resolution firmly fixed in his mind, Tom went out into the night, and alone under the stars aired his thoughts while humming to himself:

"When coming through the rye."

CHAPTER VII.

THE BOY HUNTERS.

On a sharp ledge overhanging a mighty can-

on—a ledge whose top surface was cracked and creviced with a hundred gaping rents—threatening to break loose at any moment from the mountain-side and go thundering down, a mighty avalanche, into the black gorge below—on this towering spur of the gin old mountain burned a camp-fire, whose light gleamed through the gathering twilight of the summer evening.

Within the radius of light three persons reclined in the attitude of ease and repose, chatting and laughing in a free, reckless manner, which of itself, was evidence that they heeded surrounding dangers with impunity.

These three persons were boys in point of years, the oldest not being over eighteen years of age, the youngest sixteen. They were strong, healthy, hardy-looking fellows, dressed in buckskin breeches and moccasins, with tunics of blue material and heavy straw hats.

They were armed with fine-looking rifles and a brace of revolvers and a knife each; and although they styled themselves hunters, an expert in the lore of the mountain and plain would have readily seen that they were not skilled in the profession. In fact, they were but a band of amateurs, spending the summer amid the romantic mountain scenery of Nevada, hunting and fishing and otherwise enjoying the rugged life of hunters by vigorous exercise and adventure. They were thorough "Westerners" by birth—at least two of them were, and although they were not as skilled as old hunters, they were not wanting in that knowledge essential to safety and partial success of a hunter.

Frank Casleton was the oldest of the three, and was naturally looked to as the leader of the party. He was a kind, generous-hearted boy, full of the vivacious spirit of youth. He was possessed of a liberal education, and for the past year had been on duty in a Western telegraph office, as an assistant operator.

Perry Bassett was the youngest of the three, and, like Frank, was full of youthful vigor and strength.

Billy Brady, the third boy, was Irish by birth, Irish in wit and drollery—Irish in every sense of the word. Billy's life had been an eventful one. It began as a boot-black in San Francisco, after he had attained the age of ten. He soon quit this business and ran away to sea and shipped in a whaler to the northern seas. He was gone three years, and on returning gave up the sea and took to land again, where for four years he had been drifting about at the will of life's current when we introduce him to our readers. As will naturally be supposed, Billy was a wild, wayward youth, whose education had been obtained in the school of bitter experience. Being an apt scholar, he soon had quite a knowledge of the outward world in store. Active and nimble as a cat, and brave, even to recklessness, he was also a splendid shot with both rifle and revolver. His stock of camp-fire yarns and sea stories was inexhaustible, and these were always told in peculiar Irish brogue and style.

Billy was a little careless about his person. He was not overly particular about the arrangement of his collars nor the cut of his hair. His hat had been reduced, by rough usage, to a brimless cap, in the crown of which was a single long eagle's feather.

The youths had just gone into camp after a long day's tramp through the mountains, and they were discussing the events of the day and the probabilities of the morrow over a supper of cold venison and roasted bear-rib.

Finally, when Billy had dressed his second rib and took the third, Frank Casleton remarked:

"Billy, judging from your voracious appetite, I am inclined to think you're fast developing into a bear."

"Och, and ye'es are mistaken," exclaimed Billy quickly, "and it's bear fast developin' into me."

Frank and Perry laughed, as boys will at each other's remarks.

"This am a delicious morsel, b'y," asserted Billy, gnawing away at his rib.

"Yes, it was a lucky shot that brought the bear down," said Frank. "We must roast enough of this meat to carry us through to Lake Tahoe, then we will cast our hooks and change our diet to fresh trout."

"Oh mother av Moses! and won't it be a happy day when the folks av us set down to fresh fish taken steamin' hot from the bowels av old Tahoe? Murder! and it makes me hungry to think about it."

"Hungry? What, after eating the whole half of a bear?"

"Yis, begorra; bear-meat has no taste to mees any more. Nothing but trout will tich the empty spot in me bosom," and the lad threw a neatly-dressed bone away, and doubling himself up into a ball rolled over and with a quick movement sprang backward and landed square upon his feet.

"Well done for a wild Irish boy," exclaimed Frank.

"Arrah, now, and it's ye'es that I have seen do better than that—when the bear growled t'ither day," and Billy indulged in a hearty outburst of laughter, in which he was joined by his companions. The allusion was to a bear-joke which Billy had perpetrated on Frank a day or two before, when, Casleton, believing he was set upon by a bear, had performed some extraordinary feats of ground-tumbling, much to the Irish youth's delight.

"Never mind, Billy," said Frank, "I'll be even with you yet for that bear-trick."

"Do ye'es see anything green?" asked Billy, placing the tip of his finger to his eye, then dropping upon his hands he kicked his heels into the air and stood erect upon his head.

Then he placed his hands by the side of his face, raised his head from the ground, and upon his hands walked once round the fire. Billy's next performance was to climb a tree, to the first limbs, feet foremost. A low, scrubby pine, with long, slender limbs putting out horizontally like the unnatural arms of a dwarf, stood near.

Billy was some minutes making the ascent, but he finally accomplished it to the relief of his comrades, for the feat was attended with no little danger.

Having reached the first limb, and seated himself astride of it to rest, the youth called out:

"Say now, b'ys, and it's my intrust in ould Ireland to the one that'll follow."

"I'll not attempt it, Billy," declared Perry.

"I can't 'crawfish,' Billy," added Frank; "but I can beat abt creation shooting deer, licking Indians, whipping wildcats and—"

"Running from bears," put in Billy, looking his legs around the limb and turning over and hanging head downward. "But now, b'ys," the reckless youth continued, "I'm going to walk this limb head down, and end the performance by swallowing myself."

As he concluded, the lad began moving along the slender limb. The feat was a difficult one, the whole weight at times being supported by one foot alone, which was clasped over the top of the limb like a hook.

Frank and Perry exchanged significant glances, and a light of mischief sparkled in their eyes.

Springing to their feet and seizing their own rifles, and Billy's, too, they started off shouting "Ingins!" at the top of their lungs.

A low, sullen, rumbling sound followed, and the earth trembled as if beneath the tread of an avalanche.

Billy started with an involuntary cry of terror and attempted to drop himself to the ground; but unfortunately the top of his moccasins caught on a projecting "snag," and he found himself suspended in mid-air.

That rumbling sound seemed into the thunderous roar of a rushing avalanche, true enough. The camp-fire disappeared downward—the whole ledge, to the very root of the tree upon which Billy hung, had sunk downward—carrying trees, stone and earth in one awful mass.

The trees near the edge of the precipice swayed violently in the current of air that rushed downward into the vortex. Soon the air became filled with dust and dirt that floated up in blinding clouds.

Frank and Perry's escape had been miraculous, although their own violent movement had doubtless been the hair that turned the scale and sent the mighty mass into the canon, thousands of feet below.

Wrapt in the gloom of night now rendered blinding by the thick cloud of dust that filled the air, the two boys stopped and listened. All was silent save the sullen roar of the avalanche away down in the canon.

"Perry, I am afraid our joke will turn to mourning," said Frank.

"Poor Billy! his words have come true. He said the ledge was not safe, the ground on the top being all cracked and seemed—certain evidence of a threatened land-slide."

"Hi! hi! for the love av Moses, hi! hi!" was the cry that wafted through the gloom.

"Billy lives!" cried Frank.

"God be thanked!" rejoiced Perry, and the two started to their friend's assistance.

They knew, by the cold current of air now rushing up from the gorge, when they were near the edge of the precipice. They stopped and peered around them, but all was blinding gloom. Billy's cries still rung upon the air.

Dropping upon their knees the boys hastily scraped a lot of dry pine needles into a heap, to which a burning match was applied. The flames flashed up and pierced the surrounding gloom for several feet. They saw that they stood upon the edge of the precipice, and the blood almost froze in their veins when they beheld the situation of Billy Brady.

Suspended by one foot, he hung over the awful depths of the canon—several feet beyond the reach of human help.

Perry hastily climbed the tree, some of whose roots were laid bare by the slide, and attempted to crawl along the limb to his friend; but the slender branch began to crack and sway, threatening to snap off and precipitate both into the awful depths below. He was forced to go back.

Billy's imploring cries grew louder—echoing in quavering intonations through the dismal night.

Frank and Perry exchanged glances full of the most intense agony. What were they to do?—what could they do?

Billy's escape seemed impossible. He tried repeatedly to swing himself up and catch hold of the limb, but in vain—his activity availed him nothing now with the swaying limb.

An inevitable death stared the youth in the face.

The howl of a wolf was heard far down the valley as though in anticipation of a feast.

The appeals of the lad became piteous. The faces of the two motionless friends grew ghastly in the waning light.

"My God, Perry, Billy's lost, and his death will be upon our heads!" said Frank.

Tears gushed in Perry's eyes.

The wind whistled in fiendish glee among the rocks and trees—wolves gibbered on the mountain.

And Billy, meanwhile, swung to and fro in mid-air over the black abyss—in the jaws of death!

CHAPTER VIII. TWO VERY MAD BOYS.

The agony of Billy Brady himself could not have been more bitter than that suffered by his two companions, Frank and Perry. They had become almost speechless in their fears of Billy's condition. Every moment they expected to see him lose his hold on the limb and drop into eternity.

Billy's appeals grew feeble and fainter. The youth saw, despite his situation, the helplessness of his friends, and his fears seemed to assume a more startling, terrible form—that of the *maniac*! He burst into a fit of wild, unnatural laughter that sent a shudder through the motionless forms of his companions. It was not a natural laugh, simply for the reason it was not natural for one to laugh in the presence of death.

A moment of dread silence ensued; then a last hope seemed to have inspired Billy into making one more effort for life, and with what seemed apparent ease, he threw himself upward and caught hold of the limb with both hands, at the same moment disengaging his foot.

This was done so quick and easy that the boys could scarcely believe the truth of the joyful fact.

Billy now hung over the cliff by his hands, and lost no time in transferring himself along the limb to the body of the tree, and thence to the ground, where he was greeted with demonstrations of the wildest joy.

Billy deliberately threw himself upon the ground and rolled in a fit of hearty laughter.

Frank Caselton glanced at Perry, and Perry at Frank. Each one's face became almost livid with silent indignation. They now comprehended a certain fact that was both aggravating and mortifying. It flashed across their minds the moment Billy placed himself in his wonted position to enjoy a good laugh over his silly tricks. They saw that he had been "fooling" them all the time, notwithstanding the risk he ran in doing so. His pretended inextricable position on the limb had been maintained at will—his piteous cries had been feigned, and all to repay the boys for their attempted "sell" in the false alarm of "Ingins."

"You young Irish trickster!" exclaimed Frank, in the severest tone, "I have a mind to kick you over the cliff for that dastardly caper! A joke is a joke, and—"

"Ingins!" shouted Billy, dancing about in joyous triumph; and Frank and Perry, remembering that their own attempted sell had probably been the cause of all, joined the youth in his expression of merriment.

"All right, Billy," Frank finally confessed; "this makes the second time you have tricked us. The next time we'll let you hang, whether you're in distress or not."

"And didn't mees tell ye that the ledge would topple over—that it war all cracked up ready to slide out?"

"Yes; but that didn't justify—"

"Yes in yellin' 'Ingins,'" interrupted the Irish lad.

"Hark!" exclaimed Perry, raising his hand to enjoin silence.

All listened.

Down the lonely gorge to the left of their position came the clatter of hooved feet.

"Rhobbers! outlaws! I'll bet me boots!" protested Billy, with a shake of his frowzy head.

"It must be," added Frank; "our fire had better be put out."

To extinguish the light, Billy brushed the fire over the cliff with his foot; and then they stood alone in darkness.

They listened, and far down the gorge heard the fading hoof-strokes upon the stony way.

"Begob, and I guess it war the devil," declared Billy.

"Hunting for you, I presume," Frank Caselton replied.

"Arrah, yis!—to git mees out av bad society," was the prompt retort.

When the sound of the hoofs had died away, the boys moved back nearly a mile from the cliff and selected new camping ground. They did not strike a fire, but sat down and entered into conversation.

While thus engaged, the moon sailed gaily up over the mountain-tops, and shed an effusion of light on the green, wooded hills.

A cool breeze swept up the valleys and stirred the tall pines into a gentle murmur.

Upon a sharp ridge, plainly outlined against the clear blue sky, the three boy hunters suddenly described a strange object rise as if from out the earth. It was a colossal figure of an unnatural shape. They could not make out what it was. They knew it was possessed of life, for they could see it move athwart the sky.

Billy finally suggested that they move nearer the object for the sake of information. His companions acquiesced, and the three crept stealthily forward.

They'd gone but a short distance when a second object appeared by the first. And now the latter began to assume a more tangible form. It appeared to be a man seated upon an animal whose outline answered to those of a buffalo.

There were the short, shaggy neck, the spectral horns and the slender tail; but all seemed magnified in the moonlight to twice the natural size.

For a moment the boys halted and regarded the Titan forms with silent awe, when Billy suddenly cried out:

"Look out, they're comin', b'ys!"

The three sprung behind a huge boulder. Down the acclivity thundered the strange riders, at a wild, breakneck speed. The earth trembled beneath the tread of their animals' feet.

Strange and grotesque looked the unknown riders as they sped past our friends, and stranger still the animals they bestrode.

For a moment a cloud of dust hung over their trail; and this, with the rustling bushes, the quavering echoes of the hoof-strokes, and their own wildly-throbbing hearts, told the Boy Hunters that the mysterious mountain riders were gone.

"To the devil wid yees!" exclaimed Billy, shaking his fist in the direction that the unknown had gone; "yees are nothing but a passel of bloody shpaleens shooting around here on—"

Silence was here imposed upon the speaker by a slight noise before him. The next instant two human figures rose up before them, as if conjured from the earth.

"Ingins, by the Blessed Vargin!" cried Billy, and dropping his rifle, he leaped forward like a hound and grappled with one of the figures.

Together they rolled to the earth, locked in a deadly embrace, and together they went whirling and spinning away in rapid evolutions down the steep acclivity—away beyond the help of friendly hands!

CHAPTER IX.

FRANK AND PERRY MEET A FRIEND.

FRANK and Perry were about to engage the other supposed foe, when the latter spoke.

"Who are you—white men or red?" he asked in English.

"White boys," was Frank's response.

"And we, too, strangers—two trapper-boys, and friends to all save red-skins. Our friends have made a mistake—in the darkness took each other for foes."

"Perhaps we can stop them before they injure each other," Perry suggested.

"I'm afraid it's too late, stranger," replied the trapper-boy, with a dubious shake of the head. "My companion is an Indian boy, and has no superior in strength and activity, for one of his age. And in the use of the knife he is without an equal on the border. I'm afraid your friend will be slain."

"He's a hard chap to handle. He's as agile as the panther and as strong. They may slay each other, but let us follow up and do our best to save them."

"Hut, strangers!" It was the young trapper that uttered the injunction, and who, throwing himself upon the earth, commanded Frank and Perry to do likewise.

Looking along the surface of the ground, rising gently above them, they could see a dozen or more half-nude forms, half-crouching, stealing down toward them.

It required no words to tell them what it all meant—a band of savages were upon them, and the only course left them was to flee.

"Foller me, boys," said the young trapper. Neither Frank nor Perry questioned the hon-

esty of their new-made companion. The frank simplicity of his manner and language was an assurance of the boy's character; and without a word they followed him.

The savages pursued for some distance, but the boys succeeded in getting beyond hearing, and throwing them off the trail.

The young stranger led the way along the steep, tortuous windings of the mountain hills and valleys, and finally came to a halt under a low, projecting ledge of rocks. Here they listened for their two friends and the foe. But all was silent save the clear, mellow voice of a little cascade near.

"I'm afraid our friends will prove the death of each other," said the young trapper.

"I am very sorry, indeed," returned Frank, regretfully, "that Billy was so fast, or that you did not speak sooner, stranger."

"Yes, I am sorry now," responded the trapper, "but I was afraid to speak before I knew what I was doing. But, as soon as your friend attacked mine, I knew he was no Indian."

"No, he is a wild Irish boy, who fears no danger, and who never looks before he leaps, never thinks before he acts. But, stranger, if you will pardon my curiosity, I will inquire of you who you are."

"I'm Richard Cross, a free hunter and trapper—for short, Wild Dick. My friend's name is Bold Heart. He's an Ingins—every drop of blood in his veins is Ingins. We were raised together, and a truer friend the white man hasn't got. Sly as the fox is in eluding the hounds, so is he in dodging an enemy. As a trailer of foe or game I'll put him against any hound in all Nevada. I tell you, boys, it's interesting to see him take a trail and waltz away upon it, as easy as winking, guided by that subtle, Ingins instinct. And yet, he's only seventeen. But I tell you he's a living example of the long established fact that a wild Ingins can't be 'tamed.'"

"In what respect?" inquired Frank.

"In every respect but about three which belong to civilization. In two of these he has become proficient as an American citizen. One is chewing tobacco, and the other playing cards. He'll give up a dinner any time, or set coolly down amid dangers, for a game of old sledge, eucher or poker. His love for cards led him into making a trade for a pack of the painted things which he carries with him all the time, and guards as sacredly as though it was a religious duty to do so."

"Billy Brady and he would make a good team," said Perry.

"Yes, and a stiff fight," added Frank.

"But, Dick, are you a professional hunter?"

"If you mean by that to ask whether I make my livin' huntin', I'll say yes. I've been huntin' and trappin' here and there for five years. I used to live over on 't'other side of the Missouri River, but I up stakes one day and come West. I hunted a long time in Nebraska on the Platte—me and Bold Heart did; and I tell you, boys, we had some of the jolliest times that ever was. I tell you that Bold Heart is the spunkiest, jolly dog you ever seed. He's dry sometimes, but 'cute as a nigger-lady.'"

"Then your parents are not living?" Frank questioned, growing interested in his new acquaintance.

"No, they're dead, boys," replied the youth, with a perceptible sadness in his tone. "I wouldn't be here if they were livin', for I al ways thought I had the best old mother that ever lived. I've an uncle back there who wanted me to stay with him and go to school, and learn to be a preacher, or lawyer, or doctor. But, mercy me, boys! I never could set still all day and drowse, and draw, and scraton and sleep, and toe the crack in the floor in a school-house. Life in the mountains, boys, jist knocks school-fun higher'n a kite; but then it's nice to have an education, and if mother had lived I'd never left her."

"But I tell you, boys, I love the mountains and plains. Sometimes when I go away up on the mountain among the clouds and there set down to rest. I feel queer in my mind and heart; and then I get to thinking of mother and wonder if she sees me. Sometimes the clouds are below me, and I seem to be floating along in a great sea without a friend near me. Then at times I think I can hear voices in the clouds calling to me, and I start up and answer; but no one comes. Yes, boys, I like the mountains, the forests, and the plains, with their lakes, rivers and stirring adventure. I tell you what, me and Bold Heart choose old sport."

"In our time, and oh, I do hope to goodness he'll not git killed! But, boys, what are you goin'?"

"We are spending the summer here in the mountains, and are now on our way to Lake Tahoe," replied Frank.

"To Lake Tahoe! Gosh, boys, I'll bet you'll hustle away from there in a hurry."

"Why so?"

"It's haunted, boys!" and Dick's voice fell almost to a whisper.

"Haunted?"

"Yes, sure as gully."

"There is no such thing as ghosts, Dick."

"Oh, but there is, though; you can't beat that into me, boys. They used to tell me 'bout 'em when I was a little shaver; and if you'll go with me down to the lake I'll show you some things that'll raise the very hat off your head."

"Well, we are bound for the lake, and if Billy turns up all right, we'll go in the morning, and I am sure your company will be very acceptable."

"Very well, boys, I'm your poke-berry blossom," exclaimed Dick, enthusiastically.

"I will convince you what I have said is true, and now, looky here: what would you think if you war to see an empty skiff standin' on the water, and then see an Ingins get into the canoe and go into its just the instant he sets down and takes hold of the oars, and—"

"Wouldn't think there were any ghosts about that," interrupted Perry.

"Well, but stop—wait till I git through," interposed the young hunter; "now, suppose that, after the Ingins goes into a fit—gits perfectly harmless—a hand, a human hand with a knife in it, would appear from the water and smite that Ingins dead, what'd you think of that?"

"Think it was a mean trick," said Frank, strongly inclined to regard the youth as being superstitious, and his story a myth.

"Yes, I reckon you would think so. I'll bet the chills would walk up and down your spine like leaves in an autumn wind; for it's a religious fact, boys, I did see that very identical, unvarnished thing. And that's not all, either. Thar's an island on what's called Silver Bay, and it floats about and has bushes and flowers growing upon it; and I tell ye thar's a slappin' nice smell of posies and azaleas, and honeysuckles, that comes from the island. Gosh, boys, that part's jist bunkin'-squantum, I tell you. But one day, Bold Heart and me thought we'd go over to that island and see who lived thar. So we hunted up an ole canoe and put out purty slow and careful into the lake. I tell ye, it's delight to

be on the water there, for it's just as clear as moonshine. You can see the bottom of the lake with one eye shut. It's grand to lean over the side of the canoe and watch the fish go galavatin' around like streaks of greased lightning. They look three times bigger than they really are, and now and then you can see a lazy old trout lean up against a mossy stone and look up at you with eyes aslant. You can see his gills open and close, and even see him breathing. I tell you, that water's clear, boys—why, sometimes I'd forget and think I was in the air. When we war on our way to the island, we seen so many curious things that we stopped all at once to look at them good. Every once and awhile, a shoal of fish would sail along under us like birds in the air; they all seemed to be in a hurry—scart like; and while we sat there watchin', what do you think we seen away down on the bottom of the lake, twenty-five feet below us?"

"A ghost, I presume," said Frank Caselton.

"Call it what you like, boys; I seed a man—a real, livin', movin' man—walkin' about on the bottom of the lake. I'd swear to it, dead and 'pon honor I would."

"Think you couldn't have been mistaken?" asked Perry, inclined to doubt the lad's story.

"Mistaken? Lord, no!—mistakin' nothing! My eyes are good as anybody's, and what I see, I see; and what I know, I know; and what I mean, I mean. I did, dead and-double, see a man walking about on the bottom of the lake, under the water."

Frank and Perry had become deeply interested in the lad's story. There was the candor of truth in his words, however improbable the facts might be. He told what he really believed to be true, while his auditors naturally came to the conclusion that the youth had been laboring under the vagaries of an optical delusion.

"Did he look like other men?" inquired Perry, showing an interest in the story for propriety's sake.

"Not exactly; he had big, shiny eyes, that looked awful when he raised 'em upwards. He had on queer-lookin' clothes—just like the clothes on the soldiers that used to be in the old picter-books that told about the wars in the Holy Land. I tell you, it was kind of awful, and it made me sick as all git out, and if ever you seen two fellers cut dirt for shore, it was me and that Ingins, Bold Heart. But, boys, maybe now you don't believe this; you've a right to your opinion, and if you don't b'lieve it, jist wait till we git down there."

The boys expressed a willingness to rest content until they could be shown the fact in the case, after which, they thought, it would be ample time to express an opinion.

The trio passed the night there under the ledge, each one taking his turn in standing guard.

When daylight dawned, it was at once proposed to begin a search for Billy Brady and Bold Heart.

The three youths had grown very uneasy about these two friends, and entertained but little hope of finding them alive; but, moving from their concealment, they stole softly and silently as shadows down the valley toward that point where their friends had rolled down the acclivity, in deadly struggle.

The trio crossed a little valley and gained the cover of some jutting rocks, around an angle of which was the scene of the two lads' conflict.

Upon all fours they crept around the rock, as though they feared that the lifeless, mangled bodies of their friends would burst too suddenly upon their view.

Wild Dick crept behind, and Frank and Perry close behind. In this manner they had gone several rods, when, on turning an angle of the rock, the Boy Hunter came to a sudden stop, and stepping back, enjoined silence upon his two companions.

"Look around the rock, boys," he said, in a whisper.

Frank and Perry craned their necks around the rock, and looked beyond.

But two rods away, they beheld, to their surprise, Billy Brady and the Indian boy, Bold Heart, seated astride of a fallen log, engaged in an exciting game of "seven up."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 284.)

GREAT EXPECTATIONS.—Some people expect to find perfection in this world of imperfections, and wonder when they cannot find it.

In the country, school teachers are engaged; it may be the first school they have ever taught, and receive the magnificent, generous sum of five dollars per week! Their reward is in having their names printed in the town reports, and the comment: "We found a lack of thoroughness in this school." When one reads that, he wonders how any person could be thorough at that price, except thoroughly disgusted, and he envies not the country school teacher.

Next we have the book agents, and agents for periodicals, who read, and actually believe, every word of the enticing advertisements, until their expectations are raised to the highest point, and they imagine they are going to make an immense fortune at once. But the many, many tramps, the cold looks and discouraging words they meet with, soon convinces them that the little they make is earned. The publishers always fill their advertisements with the glowing accounts of certain agents who took thirty names in an hour, but they intentionally forgot to mention those who toil through the long day, and then not get one single name. We raise our expectations too high, and feel the matter more keenly when they fail, than we would if we had been more moderate in our desires. Showmen start out with the idea that a fortune surely awaits them, and money must certainly be theirs. Their great expectations are rarely realized. The fact is, there are too many exhibitions traveling, and not enough money to support them all. Some of the traveling entertainments—we mean those that are conducted on a large scale—draw, seemingly, large houses, but their expenses are as large in proportion, and while, before starting, they are prone to imagine the end of the season will find them the possessors of several thousands of dollars, the close reality does find them owing that amount. More victims to great expectations.

The dabblers in stocks, bonds and lotteries, are inclined to fill themselves with great expectations, which are seldom more than expectations after all, for where one succeeds or wins, there are hundreds of others who make total failures. In literary life it is much the same; all writers are carried away with great expectations of success, and, for that success, they are willing to toil and slave, and too few ever win the laurels they so urgently seek for; it is not always so much a lack of merit on their part, as the fickleness and changeableness of a reading public. Perhaps they write well, but do not manage to hit the public taste; maybe they expect to jump into popularity at once, a feat very rarely accomplished.

Surely we all have our high hopes, and great expectations, which are doomed to disappointment.

"SOMETIME."

BY MAUD.

You will wish for my hand to caress you
When it lays damp and cold on my breast;
You will call for forgiveness—not heeding
My deaf ear can hear no request.

You will think of the kind eyes in anguish
When they're closed in the last silent sleep;
You will push back the curls from my forehead,
And you'll never once gently to keep.

You will think of me sometimes at twilight—
Of some kindness the tired hands wrought;
You will think of the long years of waiting,
And the weary life-battle I fought.

Then you'll wish that I would for a moment
Come back from the dark river side,
And whisper one word of forgiveness
Before I went over the tide.

For I know, though we parted in anger,
We shall meet to be parted no more,
And our hearts will be true to each other
Till we meet on that beautiful shore.

Some time when your feet are all bleeding,
And you long to leave sorrow and come,
I'll reach down my hand through the gloaming,
And bring you up safely at home.

Victoria:

OR,

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE OLIPPE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHERE THE BRIDEGROOM WAS.

THE waning sunlight of Vivie's bridal-day, streaming through the rather dirty windows of Peter Black's cottage, fell on Mr. Silvester Sweet, sitting beside the hearth, and talking very earnestly indeed. His only listener was old Judith, who had covered her face with her hands, and was moaning and crying, and rocking to and fro.

"My dear Judith—my good Judith!" he was soothingly saying, "don't distress yourself; there is no occasion—not the least in the world!"

But his good Judith was not to be comforted; she only lifted up her voice and wept the louder.

that lay on his face, and the excited light that gleamed in his eyes, were much the same as had been seen on his wedding day.

"The whole extent of the matter is this," he said, laying it down with the finger of his right hand on the palm of his left: "I will tell the story, and you will be called upon. If you do right, and keep to the truth, you and your son will get off scot free, and I will send you away from this place richer than you ever were before in your life. If, on the contrary, you bungle, and make a mess of it, you will come the pleasant little episode of Jack Wildman, who will swing from the top of the Cliftonlea jail, immediately after assizes; and you, my worthy soul! if you escape a similar fate, will rot out the rest of your life in the workhouse. Do you understand that?"

The question was rather superfluous, for Judith understood it so well that she rolled off her stool, and worked on the floor in a sort of fit. Rather dismayed, the lawyer jumped up, but, as in the course of a little more kicking and struggling, she worked herself out of it again, into a state of moaning and gasping, he took his hat and gloves and turned to go.

"You had better get up off the floor, Mrs. Wildman, and take a smoke," was his parting advice. "Good-by. Don't go to bed. You will probably be wanted before morning."

He walked away, turning one backward glance on the waving trees at the park, smiling as he did so. The fishermen he met pulled off their hats to the steward of their lady, and never before had they known him to be so condescendingly gracious in returning it. As he passed through the town, too, everybody noticed that the lawyer was in uncommon good humor, even for him; and he quite beamed on the servant-maid who opened the door of his house, when he knocked. It was a very nice house—was Mr. Sweet's—with a spacious garden around it, belonging to Lady Agnes, and always occupied by her agent.

"Where is your mistress, Elizabeth?" he asked.

"Misses be in the parlor, sir, if you please."

Two doors flanked the hall. He opened one to the right and entered a pretty room—medallion carpet on the floor, tasteful paper-hangings on the walls, nice tables and sofas, some pictures in gilt frames, a large marble-topped table strewn with books in the center of the floor, and a great many China dogs and cats on the mantel-piece. But the window—for it had only one window, this parlor—was pleasanter than all—a deep bay-window, with a sort of divan all round it; and when the crimson moreen curtains were down it was the coziest little room in the world. It was in this recess, lying among soft cushions, that the new return to Cliftonlea; and it was there her husband expected to find her now.

There she was, however; but walking up and down the room with the air of a tragedy queen. Neither Rachel nor Mrs. Siddons in their palmist's days could have surpassed it. Her hands were clenched; her eyes were flaming; her step had a fiercely metallic ring; her dark profusion of hair, as if to add to the effect, was unbound and streaming around her; and had any stranger entered just then, and seen her, his thought would have been that he had got by mistake into the cell of some private lunatic asylum.

"What new tantrum is this my lady has got into?" thought Mr. Sweet, quailing a little before the terrible light in his lady's eyes, as he shut the door and stood looking at her with his back to it. "My dear Barbara, what is the matter?"

The only answer as she strode past was a glare out of the flashing eyes, which he cowered inwardly under; even as he repeated the question:

"My dear Barbara, what is the matter?" She stopped this time and stood before him, looking so much like a frenzied maniac, that his hollow complexion turned a sort of sea-green with terror.

"Don't ask me!" she said, fairly hissing the words through her closed teeth. "don't! There is a spirit within me that is not from heaven; and the less you of all people say to me to-night, the better!"

"But, my dear Barbara—"

"Your dear Barbara!" she broke out, with passionate scorn. "Oh, blind, blind fool! blind, besotted fool that I was ever to come to this! Go, I tell you! If you have any mercy on yourself, go and leave me! I am not myself. I am mad, and you are not safe in the same room with me!"

"Barbara, hear me!"

"Not a word, not a syllable. I have awoke from my trance—the horrible trance in which I was inveigled to marry you. Man!" she cried, in a sort of frenzy, stopping before him again, "if you had murdered me, I could have forgiven you; but for making me your wife, I can never forgive you—never, until my dying day!"

"Barbara!"

But she would not hear him; for the time she was really insane, and tore up and down the room like a very fury.

"Oh, miserable, driving idiot that I have been! Sunken, degraded wretch that I am, ever to have married this thing! And you, poor, pitiful hound, whom I hate and despise more than any other creature on God's earth, you forced me into this marriage when I was beside myself, and knew not what I did! You, knowing I loved another, cajoled me into marrying yourself; and I hate you for it! I hate you! I hate you!"

Mr. Sweet's complexion, from sea-green, turned livid and ghastly; but his voice, though husky, was strangely calm.

"I did not force you, Barbara! You know what you married me for—revenge!"

"Revenge!" she echoed, breaking into a hysterical laugh. "Why, man, I tell you, one other such victory would cost me my kingdom! Yes, I have the revenge of knowing I am despised by the man whom I love! Do you hear that Sylvester Sweet—whom I love! Every hair of whose head is dearer to me than your whole miserable soul and body!"

Strange lividness this in Mr. Sweet's placid face! Strange fire this in his calm eye; but his voice was steady and unmovable still.

"You forget, Barbara, that he jilted you?"

"And you dare to taunt me with that?" she almost shrieked, all her tiger passions unchained. "Oh, that I had a knife, and I would drive it to the hilt in your heart for daring to say such a thing to me! Oh, I had fallen before—a forsaken, despised, cast-off wretch! but I never sunk entirely into the slime until I married you! Yes, he jilted me; but I love him still—love him as much as I hate and despise you! Go, I tell you, go, and leave me, or I will strangle you where you stand!"

She was mad. He saw that in her terrible face. But, through all his horror, he strove to soothe her.

"Barbara! Barbara! let me say one word! The hour for full and complete vengeance has come at last! To-night you will triumph over him—over them all! This very bride shall be torn from him at the altar, and you shall be proclaimed—Barbara—great heavens!"

She had been standing before him, but she recoiled suddenly, and would have fallen, had he not caught her. The frantic fit of fury in which she had lashed herself had given way, and with it all her mad strength. But she was not fainting; for, at his hated touch, a look of unutterable loathing came over the white face, and, with a sort of expiring effort, she lifted her hands and pushed him away.

"Go!" she said, rising and clinging to the table, while her stormy voice was scarcely louder than a whisper. "Go! If you do not leave me I shall die!"

He saw that she would. It was written in every line of her deathlike face—in every quiver of the tottering form all thrilling with repulsion. He turned and opened the door.

"I will go, then, Barbara!" he said, turning for a last look as he passed out. "I go to fulfill my promise and complete your revenge!"

He closed the door, went through the hall, down the steps, along the gravelled walk, and out into the busy, bustling street. And how was Mr. Sweet to know that he and his bride had parted forever?

With the last sounds of his footsteps, Barbara had tottered to the divan and sunk down among the cushions with a prayer in her heart she had not strength enough to utter in words, that she might never rise again. All the giant fury of her passion had passed away; but she had no tears to shed—nothing to do but lie there and feel that she had lost life, and that her seared heart had turned to dust and ashes.

There was no revenge left; that was gone with her strength—no wish for anything but to lie there and die. She knew that it was his wedding night. She heard carriage after carriage rolling away to Castle Cliffe, and she felt as if the wheels of all were crashing over her heart. The last rosy ray of daylight faded; the summer moon rose up, stealing in through the open curtains, and its pale light lay on the bowed young head like the pitying hand of a friend.

There came a knock at the front door—a knock loud and imperative, that rung from end to end of the house. Why did Barbara's heart bound, as if it would leap from her breast? She had never heard that knock before. There was a step in the hall, light, quick, and decided—a voice, too, that she would have known all the world over. She had hungered and thirsted for that voice—she had desired it as the blind desire sight.

"And am I really going mad?" was Barbara's thought.

It was no madness. The door was opened, the step was in the room, and Elizabeth, the housemaid, was speaking:

"Misses be in here, sir. I'll go and fetch a light."

"Never mind a light."

The door was closed in Elizabeth's face; the key turned to keep out intruders, and some one was bending over her as she lay, or rather, crouched. She could not tell whether she was sane or mad. She dared not look up; it must be all an illusion. What could he be doing here, and to-night?

"Barbara!"

Oh, that voice! If this was madness, she never wished to be sane again.

"Barbara!"

Some one's hand was touching her cheek—some one's hand was holding her own—the dear voice was at her ear.

"Barbara, have you no word for me, either of hatred or forgiveness? Will you not even look at me, Barbara?"

She lifted her face for one instant. Yes, it was he, pale and passionate—here, even at this hour. She dared not look—she dropped her face again in the cushion.

"Have I then shined beyond redemption? Am I so utterly hateful to you, Barbara, that you cannot even look?"

Barbara was mute.

"Do you know that I was to be married to-night—that my bride is waiting for me even now?"

"I know it! I know it!" she said, with a sort of cry—that arrow going to the mark. "Oh, Leicester, you have broken my heart!"

"I have been a traitor and a villain, I know; but, villain as I am, I could not finish what I had begun. At the last hour I have deserted them all, Barbara, to kneel at your feet again. She is beautiful and good; but I only love you, and so to you I have come back. Will you send me away, Barbara?"

Her hand only tightened over his for answer. In that moment she only knew that she was utterly miserable and desperate, and that she loved this man. She felt herself standing on a quicksand, and that it was shifting away under her feet, and letting her down.

"When I left you and went to London, Barbara, the dear low voice went on, 'and saw her first, I was dazzled; and somehow, Heaven only knows how! I promised to fulfill an engagement made years before I had even heard of her. While she glittered before me, the daze continued; but the moment I left her, the scales fell from my eyes, and I saw it all. I came back to Cliftonlea, determined to give up everything for love and you—to make you my wife, and seek together a home in the New World. I came. As I passed the cathedral, I saw a crowd, and entering the first thing I beheld was you, Barbara, the wife of another man—my repentance and resolution all too late!"

His listener had a long account to settle with that other man. It was only one more item added to the catalogue, and she said nothing; and still holding her hand tighter, and coming nearer, the voice went on:

"I thought I would give you up, forget you, and take the bride who had chosen for me; but now, at the last hour, I find that life without you is less than worthless. Your marriage was a mockery. You cannot care for this man. Will you send me away, desolate and alone, over the world?"

Still she did not speak. The sand was slipping away fast, and she was going down.

"Barbara!" he whispered, "you do not love this man—you love me. Then leave him forever, and fly with me."

CHAPTER XXV.

A STRANGE REQUEST.

The road from the town of Cliftonlea to the castle was a somewhat long one; but by turning off and going through Lower Cliffe and the park gates, the distance was shortened by half. Mr. Sweet, however, did not choose to take this short cut, but walked on through the town, at his usual steady pace, neither slowly nor hurriedly, and the white summer moon was shining over his head as he passed the Italian cottage. The whole park seemed alive. Up on a hill fireworks in full blaze, and a vast crowd was gathered round them. Down in a smooth hollow the Cliftonlea brass band was discoursing merry music; and on the velvet sward the dancers were enjoying themselves in another way. The place was one blaze of rainbow light, from the myriad colored lamps hung in the trees; and the moon was

more like a dim tallow candle, set up in the sky to be out of the way, than anything else. The joy-bells were clashing out high over all, and mingled with their loud ringing, the lawyer caught the sound of the cathedral clock tolling nine as he entered the paved courtyard. He paused for a moment with a smile on his lips.

"Nine o'clock—the appointed hour! Perhaps I will be too late for the ceremony, after all," he said to himself, as he ran up the steps. The great hall door stood open to admit the cool night air, and, standing in a blaze of light, he saw Sir Roland and Colonel Shirley at the foot of the stairs. No one else was in the domed hall but the servants, who flitted ceaselessly to and fro at the further end; and he stepped in, hat in hand. The two gentlemen turned simultaneously and eagerly, but the faces of both fell when they saw who it was.

"Good-evening, Sir Roland; good-evening, Colonel Shirley," began Mr. Sweet, bowing low. "Permit me to offer my congratulations on this happy occasion."

"Congratulations!" exclaimed the colonel; "faith, I think there will be something besides congratulations needed shortly! Have you seen Mr. Leicester Cliffe anywhere in your travels to-night, Mr. Sweet?"

Mr. Sweet looked at the speaker in undisguised astonishment.

"Mr. Leicester! it is possible that he is not here?"

"Very possible, my dear sir. I shall be most happy to see him when he comes, and let him know what it is to have a bullet through the head!"

"Is it really possible? Where in the world can he be to-night of all nights, if not here?"

"Ah! that is what I would like to have some one tell me. Wherever he may be, Castle Cliffe has certainly not the honor of containing him, and the hour for the ceremony, you see, is past."

"It is astonishing!" said Mr. Sweet, slowly, and looking a little bewildered by the news. "It is incomprehensible! I never heard anything like it in my life!"

"I agree with you. But that does not mend the matter, unhappily; and if he does not appear within the next fifteen minutes, you will have the goodness to go and stop those confounded bells, and send all those good people in the park about their business!"

"And there has been no wedding, then, to-night?" said Mr. Sweet, still looking bewildered.

"None! Nor is there likely to be, as far as I can see."

"And Miss Shirley is still—"

"Miss Shirley! and seems in a fair way of remaining so for the present, at least."

"You have something to say, Sweet, have you not?" asked Sir Roland, who had been watching the lawyer, and seemed struck by something in his face.

Mr. Sweet hesitated a little; but the colonel interposed impatiently:

"Out with it, man! If you have anything to say, let us hear it at once."

"My request may seem strange—bold—almost inadmissible," said the lawyer, still hesitating. "But I do assure you, I would not make it were it not necessary."

"What is the man driving at?" broke out the colonel, in astonishment and impatience. "What's all this palaver about? Come to the point at once, Sweet, and let us have this inadmissible request of yours."

"It is, colonel, that I see Miss Shirley at once and alone! I have two or three words to say to her that it is absolutely necessary she should hear."

Sir Roland and Colonel Shirley looked at each other, and then at Mr. Sweet, who, in spite of every effort, seemed a little nervous and excited.

"See Miss Shirley at once, and alone!" repeated Sir Roland, looking at him with some of his sister's piercing intensity. "You did right to say that your request was a strange and bold one. What can you possibly have to say to Miss Shirley?"

"A few very important words, Sir Roland."

"Say them, then, to the young lady's father; she has no secrets from him."

"I beg your pardon, I cannot do so. That is, I would infinitely rather say them to herself first, and leave it to her own good pleasure to repeat them."

"Are you sure it is nothing about my son?"

"Certainly, Sir Roland. Of your son I know nothing."

"Well, it's odd!" said the colonel. "But I have no objection to your seeing Vivia, if she has none. Come this way, Mr. Sweet."

Taking the wide staircase in long bounds, as lightly as he could have done twenty years before, the colonel gained the upper hall, followed by the lawyer, and tapped at the door of the rose room. It was opened immediately by Lady Agnes, who looked out with an anxious face.

"Oh, Cliffe! has Leicester come?"

"No, indeed! but a very different person has—Mr. Sweet."

"Mr. Sweet! Does he bring any news? Has anything happened?"

"No; though he says he wants to see Vivia."

"See Vivia!" exclaimed her ladyship, looking in the last degree amazed, not to say shocked, at the unprecedented request. "Has Mr. Sweet gone crazy?"

"Not that I know of. But here he is to answer for himself."

Thus invoked, Mr. Sweet presented himself with a deprecating bow.

"I beg your pardon, my lady. I know the request seems strange; but I cannot help it, for I see Miss Shirley at once, and the explanation shall come afterward."

"I shall do nothing of the sort! I'm surprised at you, Mr. Sweet! What can you mean by so outrageous a request?"

"My lady, if you insist upon it, I must tell you; but I earnestly entreat you not to force me to a public explanation, until I have spoken in private to Miss Shirley."

"Oh, it is something about Leicester! I know it is, and he wants to prepare her for some shock. Mr. Sweet, do not dare to trifle with me! I am no baby; and if it's anything about him, I command you to speak out at once!"

"Lady Agnes, I have said, again and again, that it is nothing about him, and I repeat it. Of Mr. Leicester Cliffe I know nothing whatever. The matter simply and solely concerns Miss Shirley alone."

"He told!" cried a silvery voice. And the beautiful smiling face of the bride peeped over grandmamma's satin shoulder.

"Who wants Miss Shirley? Oh, Mr. Sweet, is it you? Has anything happened to—"

She paused, coloring vividly.

"Nothing has happened to Mr. Cliffe, I hope, Miss Shirley," said Mr. Sweet, turning his anxious face toward that young lady. "I have no doubt he will be here presently; but

before he comes, it is of the utmost importance I should see you a few minutes in private."

Miss Shirley opened her blue eyes, according to custom, extremely wide, and turned them in bewildering inquiry upon papa.

"Mr. Sweet has some awful secret to reveal to you, Vivia," observed that gentleman, smiling. "The 'Mysteries of Udolpho' were plain reading compared to him this evening."

"If Mr. Sweet has anything to say to Miss Shirley," said Lady Agnes, haughtily, "let him say it here and at once. I cannot have any secret interview and mysterious nonsense."

"It is not nonsense, my lady."

"The more reason you should out with it at once. You do not need to be told that anything that concerns Miss Shirley concerns her father and myself. If you do not like that, you had better take your leave."

Mr. Sweet turned so distressed and imploring a face at this sharp speech toward Miss Vivia, that that good-natured young lady felt called upon to strike in.

"Never mind, grandmamma. There is nothing so very dreadful in his speaking to me in private, since he wishes it so much. It is not wrong—is it, papa?"

"Not wrong, but rather silly, I think."

"Well, Mr. Sweet and I are so wise generally that we can afford to be silly for once! Don't say a word, grandmamma; it's all right. This way, if you please, Mr. Sweet."

Turning her pretty face as she went, with an arch little smile, she tripped across the hall, and opened a door opposite—what was called the winter drawing-room. The lawyer followed the shining figure of the bride into the apartment, whose pervading tints were gold and crimson, and which was illuminated with amber shaded lamps, filling it with a sort of golden haze. He closed the door after him, and stood for a moment with his back to it.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 269.)

Sports and Pastimes.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

BASE-BALL.

PROFESSIONAL ARENA.

The month of June last saw no less than thirty-one games played in the professional arena, which were won by scores of nine runs and less.

This was out of a list of sixty-one games. Of this number sixteen were won by scores of five runs and less for the winning nines, these latter scores showing masterly play. There were but two games marked by "muffin scores," or scores of upward of twenty runs for the winning nines, and none in which both sides scored double figures in runs.

The finest contests of the month were those games marked by scores of 1 to 0, of which the model contest—the finest of the season thus far—was that between the Chicago and Hartford clubs, played in Chicago, June 19th, eleven innings being required to be played before the match was decided.

The record of what we call model games—contests in which the winning nines score but nine runs and less—for June, in which professional clubs take part, is as follows. The record is in the order of the smallest scores:

June 21, St. Louis vs. Phila., at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 22, St. Louis vs. Mutual, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 23, St. Louis vs. Boston, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 24, St. Louis vs. Phila., at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 25, St. Louis vs. Hartford, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 26, St. Louis vs. Chicago, at Chicago.....	2 0
June 27, St. Louis vs. Mutual, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 28, St. Louis vs. Washington, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 29, St. Louis vs. Red Stocking, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 30, St. Louis vs. Hartford, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 1, Hartford vs. Atlantic, at Brooklyn.....	2 0
June 2, Boston vs. Hartford, at Boston.....	2 0
June 3, Boston vs. West, at Keokuk.....	2 0
June 4, Boston vs. Atlantic, at Boston.....	2 0
June 5, Mutual vs. Red Stocking, at St. Louis.....	2 0
June 6, Mutual vs. Western, at Keokuk.....	2 0
June 7, Mutual vs. Chicago, at Chicago.....	2 0
June 8, Chicago vs. Hartford, at Chicago.....	2 0
June 9, Chicago vs. Boston, at Chicago.....	2 0
June 10, Chicago vs. Mutual, at Chicago.....	2 0
June 11, Hartford vs. New Haven, at Providence.....	2 0
June 12, Atlantic vs. New Haven, at Washington.....	2 0

It will be seen that the St. Louis club takes the lead in fielding displays, though the Chicago club had the smallest score recorded.

Up to the close of June the Boston led the score in the race for the pennant, with the Hartford second, and the Athletics third. Since then, however, the Athletics have stepped to the front, and now stand next to the Boston "Reds," who have a decidedly winning lead as the record below—up to July 29th—fully shows.

The disbandment in succession of the Centennial, Western and Washington club nines leaves but ten contesting nines in the arena, the games played with these three clubs being thrown out. The record is as follows:

CLUBS.	Boston.	Atlantic.	St. Louis.	Chicago.	New Haven.	Red Stock.	Western.	Centennial.
Boston.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Atlantic.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
St. Louis.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Chicago.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
New Haven.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Red Stock.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Western.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Centennial.....	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15

Games lost..... 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15

THE AMATEUR ARENA.

There has been some very fine play shown by the amateur nines of the country, called so, be it understood, simply because they do not belong to the Professional National Association, and not because they are strictly amateur organizations, for not one in twenty of the so-called amateur clubs of the season are amateur under the rule of excluding players who are compensated for their services by "money, place or emolument." The record of amateur playing of this kind of amateur nines during June and July, is as follows:

June 17, Atlantic vs. Olympic, at Paterson.....	4 0
June 18, Boston vs. Washington, at Washington.....	4 0
June 19, Burlington vs. Trenton, at Trenton.....	4 0
June 20, Lowell vs. Resolute, at Portland 10 inn.....	4 0
June 21, Hartford vs. Star, at Covington, Ky.....	4 0
June 22, Hartford vs. Yale, at Hartford.....	4 0
June 23, Lowell vs. Live Oak, at Lynn.....	4 0
June 24, Burlington vs. Trenton, at Burlington.....	4 0
June 25, Enterprise vs. Atlantic, at Minneapolis.....	4 0
June 26, Live Oak vs. Essex, at Boston 11 inn.....	4 0
June 27, Archer vs. Active, at Reading.....	4 0
June 28, Lowell vs. Live Oak, at Lynn.....	4 0
June 29, Keystone vs. Yale, at Philadelphia.....	4 0
June 30, Princeton vs. N. Haven, at Princeton.....	4 0
June 1, Red Stocking vs. Empire, at St. Louis.....	4 0
June 2, Chelsea vs. Resolute, at Brooklyn.....	4 0
June 3, Archer vs. Pacific, at Philadelphia.....	4 0
June 4, Milford vs. Buckeye, at Columbus.....	4 0
June 5, 5th Inf. vs. 4th Cav., at Cuyahoga.....	4 0
June 6, Carbondale vs. Arlington, at Carbondale.....	4 0
June 7, Active vs. Goodwill, at Reading.....	4 0
June 8, Ludlow vs. Milford, at Cincinnati.....	4 0
June 9, Reliance vs. Star, at Brooklyn.....	4 0

June 8, Thebe vs. Archer, at Philadelphia...	5 2
June 12, Mystic vs. Noddle, at Boston.....	5 2
June 10, Reliance vs. Jasper, at Manhattan 11.....	5 2
June 11, Olympic vs. Union, at Paterson.....	5 2
June 12, Yale vs. Amherst, at Amherst.....	5 2
June 13, Clippervs. Amateur, at Rockville, Md.....	5 2
June 14, Bardett vs. Noddle, at Lowell.....	5 2
June 15, Enterprise vs. Centennial, at Minola.....	5 2
June 16, Dacca vs. Mutual, at Philadelphia.....	5 2
June 17, Milford vs. Cincinnati, at Milford.....	5 2
June 18, Active vs. Doerr, at Reading, Pa.....	5 2
June 19, Philadelphia vs. Empire, at St. Louis.....	5 2

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BRILLIANT CORPS OF WRITERS,

and will soon be introduced to our readers in a serial story of Border Life which he pronounces to be "the Best Pen Work he ever did," viz.:

DEADLY EYE,

The Unknown Scout;

OR,

THE BRANDED BROTHERHOOD.

It is a life and adventure romance drawn from his own experiences, with a skill and rich fancy which prove the gentleman to be

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In the leading character of this fine serial, we have

An Unknown Marksman and Scout, who is, by no means, a myth—whose acts of wondrous skill with rifle and revolver, and whose astonishing daring in the face of danger made him equally a terror to red-man and white, and a profound mystery to all, but a mystery no more when the denouement comes.

ELEMENTS OF FIERCE EXCITEMENT abound in the story, but so do rare features of beauty in narrative, persons and incidents—making it, altogether, most captivating reading for old and young alike.

WE yet have on hand quite a number of the celebrated Ralph Ringwood's "Campfire Yarns," which we shall give in coming issues of the JOURNAL. These "Yarns" are conceded to be quite inimitable, of their kind, showing a familiarity with Border character that few writers can claim, and a power of narration that no writer, living or dead, ever excelled. Ringwood (Capt. A. D. Hines) died about three years since, and these stories, therefore, have a melancholy interest as the last work of a man of unquestioned genius.

Sunshine Papers.

"What's Folly in a Man—"

"What's folly in a man is guilt in woman!"

I heard a speaker say that yesterday. His look, his manner, his tone, linger in my memory. The words have been ringing in my ears ever since they were uttered.

Have I been weighing the affirmation in the balance of my judgment?

Not at all. It is false on the face of it. I negative it here and now.

What's folly in a man is guilt in woman! What's guilt in a man is guilt in man! What absurdity it would be to proclaim that a lie, a defalcation, a forgery, a murder on the part of a woman is guilt, but on the part of a man is mere folly! What is simply folly in John is simply folly in Jane. Guilt is the same whether it rests on the head of Henry or Henrietta. Sin is sin irrespective of sex.

But I have pondered these words, have been unable to banish them from my mind, because it seems to me that, though the fallacy of the assertion should be apparent to all, it is willfully and knowingly accepted by many of the sex whose misdemeanors it would fain pardon—that, through all the paths of life, from the time the male infant wears his first knee breeches to the end of his natural life, he seeks to condemn woman and shield himself with the aphorism, "What's folly in a man is guilt in woman."

Nay, gentlemen, do not interrupt me. I do not pretend to assert that you use those exact words. Indeed, this may be the first time you have ever heard them. But I maintain that the import of those words colors many of your own acts and most of your criticisms upon the acts of your lady friends. It is human nature, I know, to seek an excuse for our misdoings; especially to accept one that some fallacious reasoner places ready framed in our hands; but, answer me truly, ye beaux, is it fair? is it honest? is it manly? is it true politeness? to judge others with more severity than you judge yourselves?

How many, many times I have heard you speak lightly, sometimes disparagingly, of a lady who has flirted with you. Is it honorable for you to condemn her for what you commenced, what you earnestly strove to lead her into doing? Are you not equally foolish? If she lowered her character any by responding to your smiles, did you not lower yours equally by seeking to evoke those smiles? Pray, by what right do you brand her with light words and sneering voice, knowing, as you must, that "faint praise is damning," and then turn away considering yourself eligible company for the retiring, modest daughters of the most fastidious man in the town? Do not be unjust, and unmanly, and strive to screen your fame behind the contemptible axiom quoted at the head of this essay! Own up honorably that if it was folly on her part, it was equal folly on yours. Judge her by the standard that you would be judged by.

You come home from the store and throw a torn glove and ripped coat in the lap of sister Ella, who is deep in the mysteries of embroidery, or the unraveling plot of a new book. "Mend those for me, Ella," you say carelessly, and pass on to your room to prepare to escort some lady friend to concert or party. Does it not occur to you that only yesterday you criticized Ella's manners at table, because she said, "Pass me the bread," instead of asking, "Will you please pass the bread?" or, "Will you be so kind as to pass the bread?"

Yet you carelessly tell her to mend your gloves and, when mended, you take them without a "thank you." It makes all the difference in the world that you are of the male and she of the female gender, doesn't it? You criticize any omission of politeness on her part, but think it not at all out of the way for you to be positively rude.

"Oh!" you say, "girls ought to be perfectly polished in their manners, but they must not expect us to be ditto."

Astonishing revelation, young gentlemen! And why must they not expect you to be ditto? An unpardonable sin in a woman to be rude, you say; merely an oversight on your part. In other words, your view of the subject is traceable to the belief that what is only folly in a man is guilt in woman. But you know it is false! Not one of you dare deny it!

You can never be a thorough gentleman until you hold yourself, even in the most trifling matters, as amenable to the laws of politeness, as you hold each and all of your lady friends.

You hold your sisters bound to do any favor that you ask of them; but, when they wish a bundle brought home from down-town, a note left at a friend's, an order carried to the florist, you quietly announce to them that you have something else to do besides waiting on them.

Neither are they bound to wait on you, my dear beaux! (don't be shocked, but remember in what a general sense I address you.)

How seldom you ask Mollie to go with you to concert, theater, or lecture. To-night you do, because you have a seat engaged for another young lady, and she has disappointed you. Mollie politely refuses to play "second fiddle." The result is intense indignation on your part. You call her disagreeable, disoblige, and rude!

Just stop a minute! Lest week, Mr. A. B. C. took Minnie to a concert. Mollie wished to go too. Papa said he would take her, but for a previous engagement; and he offered you the money for tickets, and said he would order a carriage as he went out, if you would go with her. Don't you remember that you refused to go, on the plea of a headache; but called around on Ned Farrell and played billiards with him until eleven o'clock?

Ah, you remember it now! I am glad that you do! If you please, who was rude, disagreeable, and disoblige then? Would you not have fared better to-night, if you had remembered last week that true politeness is as obligatory on you as on your sisters?

Now, by way of truth, suppose you agree to make the rules by which you pass judgment on your own conduct, quite as stringent as those by which you judge your lady acquaintances, and see if you cannot win a woman's sincere praise of—"He is a perfect gentleman."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

AT MY WINDOW.

My work being done, and having an hour to myself, I am seated at my window. My eyes wander up and down the street, and I listen to many a footfall. There is certainly some music in them, else they would not sound so pleasant to my ear. A history of the ways by which people live, move and have their being seems opened to me. The street lamps are lit and people are homeward bound, some with blighted hearts and others with merry faces—high and low, rich and poor blended together. Stations of life as different as their trades jostle together. Yet are they not all equal in the presence of their God?

Look at those poor weary beings toiling homeward—beings who are almost as weary when they arise in the morning as when they retire to bed at night. Their daily work tires them so that they are too tired to sleep. Their toil is the same monotonous round of duties, day after day, until the brain swims, the feet weary, the body grows sick, and death claims a new victim; then another will take the vacant place and leave it about as soon.

Here comes a poor widow! I know she is widowed by her black clothing, and that she is poor by her cheap material. She is going home, but that home will be one of sorrow and darkness, for the light has been put out and the one who was so good and kind to her lies in her narrow grave.

Here approaches a manly footfall; it is Harry Rollins—a happy fellow indeed, full of life, vivacity and cheer. He was married last week to one of the best creatures in the world. How he hurries home! He well knows who will be at the door to meet him and greet him. He knows his loving bride will measure to a minute the time of his return. May they always be as loving as now, and may it be many a long year before she listens in vain for that footstep!

Another comes. This time the footfall is that of a careworn little child—a little girl in tattered garments. She seems almost too young and frail to be abroad, alone. The sad cadence in her voice as she cries, "Spare me but a penny," tells a tale of want and woe. What a home has she to go to! What misery will greet her there? The very parent, who gave her birth, is more than half the time mad with liquor, and wreaks her cruelty on this poor, unfortunate and innocent child.

When I look on this poor little one—one of the thousands of poor creatures—I think we ought to go into the hovels of these poor and oppressed children—endeavor to mitigate their trials—show them by kindly words and loving deeds that the world is not all cruel—that there are hearts that yet love them—that there are beings who will care for them. Our presence would carry sunlight to their darkened existence and pleasure to their joyless lives.

I wonder why it is that, when we are all equal in this world, our lots are so different, and while some live in plenty others toil for a mere crust of bread?

Patter, patter go the feet, and in their sound you seem to know which belongs to the happy and which to the disconsolate, which to the merry and light-hearted and which to the downcast and sad. The great panorama of wealth and poverty continues to move on.

As the wealthy ride by in carriages I wonder if they think of those who are starving all around them, starving not only for food but for a kindly word! Do the joyful hearts ever think of the lives that are fleeing away, uncared for while living and who will be unmourned for when dead? Do they cast one thought on those who are not only wrestling with sickness but with poverty as well? None of us like to have our gayety intruded upon by such solemn thoughts, and so we banish them,

and once banished we seldom let them intrude into our thoughts again.

What a medley of footsteps, merry school-girls and tired workingwomen; careless school-boys and cheerless workmen; the proud aristocrat and the cleaner of the sewers! A motley set and a monster moving mass of humanity! Men and women of many tribes and nationalities! All have their hopes, fears, struggles, successes and failures, loves and hates. If we could print the thoughts of each would they not make a strange and varied book? Are there not secrets wrapped up in the breasts of these travelers of the street that, if told, would cause amazement to the world? Are there not others who are either plotting or acting tragedies that would curdle one's blood if known?

The footsteps still continue and seem as if they would never cease. All are traveling to the Great Beyond—Eternity! May they all reach the mansion prepared by our Maker, without whose knowledge even a sparrow cannot fall!

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Whitehorn's American Rifle Teamsters.

A good many years ago when I was young I organized an American Rifle Team.

It was a full team, you may be sure, and each member considered himself a horse, and of course it was a one-horse team.

We had all shot rifles before and knew how to pull the trigger with the utmost precision, and to point the rifle in the direction of the target.

We accepted a challenge from the English team, and as we represented the Republic, we engaged passage in the steerage of a sailing vessel so that none of us would be washed overboard, and were received in Liverpool with cheers and bologna, and bouquets, and roast beef, and applause, and hold 'English h'ale, and great eclat, and crackers, including cheese.

We were to shoot for the International gourd, and of course the event would be looked upon by the eyes of both countries, and read of with great interest by the blind, and listened to eagerly by the deaf.

Such good marksmen were we that every one of us made his mark whenever we went to sign our names to any little note, given for board and washing, and never desired to be more perfect than that.

We were thorough disciples of Mark himself and read him constantly.

We could shoot at anything far away just as easily as anything close, and no matter how big it was if the ball didn't get a wrong start we could hit it.

We were such skillful marksmen that we would not buy anything without telling them to "mark it down."

We were what is called crack shots, that is, we could shoot through the crack in a fence if it was of sufficient size, and the ball didn't hit a board.

We could shoot into an ale-house with the utmost exactness.

The target was a four-story barn. We would have had a larger one, but in the absence of anything better we had to content ourselves with that.

The range was exactly a thousand yards, or a thousand rods; it has been so long ago that my recollection may be a little out of range.

There must have been somewhere between four thousand and sixteen thousand people present on the grounds, and the day was extra brightened for the occasion.

We spent an hour shooting along a straight fence just to get our hand in, and found our aim very much improved by it.

I opened the match by firing the first shot. I would have struck the barn if the ball had been large enough, I have no doubt. As it was the ball went a little too far to the right, as the air was stirring in that direction, and the ball being a little too small and the distance a little too wide, the edge of it could not touch the barn, as anybody with half a philosophical eye could readily see.

Jones, of our team, pulled away next—he was a good puller—and struck the barn six times. He was charged with shooting a hand full of balls, but he explained that his rifle shot so hard that the force was sufficient to make a single ball bounce back and go forward again half a dozen times before it stopped. The English team looked on that rifle as a wonderful invention.

Smith next made a very fine shot, the ball going through an open window in front and coming out an open window in the rear. We gave three cheers for this feat.

Brown laid down to take a good aim and it was so long before he could draw a good bead on the target that he went to sleep. He was waked up again and fired with great coolness, but the natural consequence of the lead being heavier than the atmosphere the ball gravitated to the earth before it reached the target.

Jacobs drew a little more ale and a bead, and turning his head, fired. The ball would have struck the center had it not struck a streak of air and glanced up before it got there, and thereby went up over the roof about ten feet.

Wiggins made an off-hand shot, standing up—as the smoke cleared away and he got up off his back the gun was a strong shooter both ways it was announced a miss; but Wiggins just then recollected that he had forgotten to put a ball in the rifle; he was allowed another trial by the umpire, and shot over the barn, declaring that the target was too close for him to shoot at.

Barlow shot, but the barn wasn't wide enough out; he declared that the heat of the sun had warped the direction of his ball.

Jenkins, our fat, good-natured member, smiled, waved his handkerchief to the ladies, drew a fine sight, shut both eyes and fired, and succeeded in missing the barn by a handsome distance. He ran his score up at the beer-stand.

The English team missed the target with the precision which we did, perfectly riddling the atmosphere around it.

Both teams were pronounced the champions, and the gourd was presented to me for courtesy.

We next shot for a tin-plated cup, which was won by me. I putting a ball closer in the immediate vicinity of the barn than anybody else.

Great enthusiasm was manifested over the American Teamsters, and the mayor invited us to dine at the poorhouse that day, and in the evening we were escorted through the city by a squad of police, and put on board the freight-train for London, where, upon arriving, we were received with the greatest attentions by the hackmen.

We made a grand hit in England if we did miss.

Proudly,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

MODESTY is a merit, as shades to figures in a picture, giving it strength and beauty.

Topics of the Time.

—The Seyid of Zanzibar is presenting Eastern sword, heavily mounted with gold, to various English mayors and town clerks who have been attentive to him.

—As convincing proof that the grasshoppers read the papers, it is said that they have this season entirely avoided a certain county which was mentioned last year as raising the poorest quality of wheat in Kansas. If the potato-bugs see this item, they will please understand that only the poorest quality of potato-vines grow on our farm. The best vines grow in the next county, though our neighbor, who pastures all his chickens in our garden, has a five-acre lot of potatoes that the bugs must enjoy.

—The Freemasons of Iowa are very much exercised over a recent decision of the Grand Master that dancing in the lodge-rooms is inconsistent with the good of the craft. Two subaltern officers have been deprived of their positions for acting in violation of the decision. No more light fantastic toe in the lodges. Bricklayers, plasterers and stone cutters may "cut up Dido" with Terpsichore, but the mason, when Terpsichore taps him on the shoulder, must say, "No, Terpy!" How he must feel to say it!

—Professor Tice of Missouri has discovered that the planet Jupiter is largely responsible for the weather changes on this planet. His theory is that the greatest atmospheric disturbances take place at the equinoxes of this planet once in twelve terrestrial years, and lesser mischief at the equinoxes of other orbs. Look out for bad weather, he adds, with perilous precision, on July 19, September 1 and 22, October 14 and 15, and November 27. We suppose, therefore, it will hereafter not be considered swearing to say "By Jupiter!"

—We adverted last week to the swarms of tramps—many of them burglars in disguise—running over the country, and suggested the proper remedy of consigning every one of them to the nearest poorhouse. We now see that New London, Conn., is the first to move in the right direction. Mayor Waller of that city having issued a proclamation calling public attention to the new law, a tramp was arrested, and on his person were found a long dirk, a heavily loaded "billy," and two razors. A pleasant customer to have prowling about! "Go for it!"—them!

—A singular effect of flame on an electric spark has recently been noticed and described in the technical journals. The jet consisted of a glass tube drawn out to a point, and the flame had a length of about an inch and a diameter of only an eighth of an inch. Inserting this between the two terminals of a Holtz machine, the length of spark obtainable was at once increased from less than ten inches to over twelve, the full distance to which the balls could be separated. The same increase was not obtained by simply inserting a conductor between the two terminals, a ball an inch in diameter only lengthening the spark about an inch.

—In spite of the prejudice which exists against suet butter, it is a fact that the manufacture has been making great progress, and the quantity of the material now consumed is certainly greater than ever before. There is a large factory in Hamilton, Canada, from which some 2,000 lbs. per week of imitation butter are shipped to all parts of the world. Another and still larger establishment in Boston, Mass., turns out a very great supply. In many cases this artificial product finds its way directly to the butter-producing districts of New York and New Jersey, and then is sent to market as genuine butter! It is certain that immense quantities of the oleomargarine are sold by dealers as true butter, and that the profits of the trade are very large.

—The San Francisco Bulletin says that a farmer on a tule ranch lately sold a part only of his wheat harvest for \$40,000, holding the remainder for an increase in price. This crop was raised on an island in the Sacramento river, the whole area of which was not worth twelve cents an acre a few years ago. It is estimated that there are 25,000 acres of the marshes known as tule land this year sown to timothy and wheat, while 25,000 more have been so well protected by levees that crops will be produced next year. The reclamation of these lands, which four years ago did not yield a dollar in value, will add next year at least \$2,000,000 to the agricultural products of California. Which is good for a State that has one hundred square miles of useless mountain land for every ten of a able soil.

—Some interesting facts have been given relating to the Peabody Fund for the poor in London, which show the advancement of that institution. Some \$2,000,000 has been spent, and nearly \$3,000,000 is still left in the treasury. A large number of tenement houses have been erected in the different towns, which will accommodate about 1,400 poor families. Oh, for some good angel to soften the hearts of our millionaires and to make them see in Peabody's noble example the true use of riches! Stewart, with one-tenth of his vast and now rapidly increasing fortune, could do for the poor of New York city just what Peabody did for the poor of London, but, alas! he grips his gigantic and rapidly increasing fortune with the stern clasp of one whose philosophy seems to be—"Every man for himself and Satan catch the hindmost!"

Dr. G. Bloede of Brooklyn declares that Katie King is materializing regularly at seances given privately by Mrs. Holmes in Philadelphia. He says he attended one of these occurrences recently, adding, "Katie King not only appeared at the aperture, but came out in full form three or four times. Besides her, a Swabian woman, not recognized, it seems, by any of those present, materialized herself and proved her genuineness by talking in the Swabian dialect of the German language, which, as we may presume without appearing too bold, is not likely to be familiar to Katie King or Mrs. Holmes. Besides, this strange form appeared to all to be at least two heads taller than Katie." We had supposed the Katie King humbug had exploded with Katie's confession to Robert Owen of her imposture, but it seems the world has its fools who never humbug to solid sense, so they "pay their money and gets their fill" of it.

—Apropos to the "failure" in New York, the other day, of a great banking house, is this: "Yes, these are awful hard times," said a Wall Street broker, talking to a friend, last evening. "Mighty tough, I expect," was the reply. "Why," said the broker, "I've been investing and investing for a year back—a pile of money. I assure you—and I find I've been losing like fury." "Indeed?" "True's I'm living. I've lost a cent, I've lost more than \$300,000." "No?" "Certain," continued the broker, "and what makes me feel that way is that fully \$150 of it was my own." The last failure was for only six million dollars! and what was particularly aggravating, a few thousands of that enormous sum actually was the firm's own money. Nearly one-half of the six millions, it is said, was lost with the firm by travelers going abroad, as it was found to draw against their expenses. They'll now have to get home as best they may.

—We are now told by observant correspondents, writing from Germany, that all the fame which Prince Frederick Charles and Prince Fritz won in the late war with France is purely fictitious. It is asserted that if the German armies had been left to the guidance of these personages, the sum total of the campaign would have been vastly different. They never directed a movement, not the deploying of a corporal's guard. Moltke and his staff conceived and executed every detail of every movement, the princes not being trusted with the most insignificant point. The chief of the staff of each army was its actual commander, the royal princes serving merely as figure-heads to impress the people with their dependence upon royalty for success in battle. So it goes in nearly every department of public administration; some royal imbecile figures as the responsible head, while the work is really done by brilliant men who are comparatively unknown.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage. MSS. returned by registered mail. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS." MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy;" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving on each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unsuitable to be or well worthy of use.—All expedited and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to decline "Cough Drops;" "Consin Sophie," etc.; "Sun and Storm;" "Thoughts by Seaside;" "Constancy;" "Perils Many;" "The Hunter's Oath;" "High Jinks;" "Perils of the Deep."

The following we will try and find place for: "Only for a Day;" "A Patent Heart;" "The Embassy of Love;" "A Parable Lost;" "The Lady of the Hut;" "Sporting in the Brakes."

TO CORRESPONDENTS GENERALLY.—So many letters come to us without address in full—Town, County and State—that we are given much needless trouble. Almost every failure to receive books, etc., ordered is chargeable to imperfect mail address. We now have several volumes containing money which are wholly without correspondence name! Correspondents must be very careful to give State as well as Town address.

IRVING S. We do not want the service proffered. Geo. M. S. Have answered by mail. Cannot use the story.

NUMISMATICAL. Will try and solve the true character of your coin, and report.

W. R. McC. Paris. We do not care to see the MS. novel. Are not in want of that class of matter. C. B. R. We publish, but very few of the SATURDAY JOURNAL stories in book form, only those greatly in demand, but which we cannot reprint in the paper.

J. M. S. Chicago. We know of no one, just now, to whom to send your proposition, but will reserve it for any future applicant for a complete file of the paper.

HENRY W. The "Industrial Company" is a grand lottery scheme, and is not an object for the SATURDAY JOURNAL to have a part in. It is a building in New York for a permanent "exposition."

CHAR. D. Buffalo Bill's story commences in No. 287. It will make a grand out object for the SATURDAY JOURNAL. "Witches of New York" in No. 119.

W. F. S. We can supply numbers containing "The Specter Barque" (124-128). Want two novels for money inclosed, and return you regard to balance due on rest of order.

J. C. McN. Have published the recipe asked for at least a dozen times. Apply lemon-juice; rub with the juice of a ripe tomato; or moisten powder with glycerine, and rub face night and morning.

CONSTANT READER. We know of no book which gives rules for the preparation of life-size portraits. On Wall street and in banking-houses interest tables are largely in use. A complete volume of these tables is worth \$10.

J. E. O. If you have talent for music cultivate it. Select some instrument and go under instruction at once. Own the instrument so as to practice at home. Your age is not at all against success. It is practice which will tell.

J. J. J. From New York to Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, the distance is 4,550 miles. The cheapest mode of transit is by sailing vessel from New York. It is a long journey, but the Portuguese language is the language there spoken, and which should be learned to succeed in business there.

DASHING CHARLEY. The "Wolf Demon" commenced in No. 190 and ended in No. 285. "One-eyed Al" commenced in No. 199 and ended in No. 210. We can supply complete sets of either story.

SCENA. The so-called Shakespeare Death-mask was found in Mexico, in an old "curiosity shop," in the year 1843. It really bears evidence of being a cast from the face of the great poet, after death. If authentic it is a great find, and the work of Shakespeare's features, head and expression.

SAM S. A contract made with a minor is void in law, but a parent or guardian is responsible for debts contracted by their minor child, and is liable for charges. Signatures in pencil, to note or contract, are good in law, but an agreement without consideration is wholly void.

INQUIRY. The late I. M. Singer, of sewing-machine fame, was an American. He was, in early life, an actor, but failed of success. His sewing-machine grew from very crude shape to its present perfection. He spent \$100,000 in perfecting it. His fortune gathered here, and died there a few weeks since.

B. NEWMAN. According to the law of New York a person sentenced to imprisonment for life has no existence, civilly. His wife may marry again, and his property descends to his heirs as though he were dead in fact.

DASHING BOY No. 2. The time 2:24 is very fast. If your horse actually made it he is worth \$5,000. The horses that have made that time are given in the *Turf Chronicle*, as: G. B. Daniels; Frank Wood; James Howell; Junior; Duke Prince; Ch. Modoc; Brother Jonathan; Chicago.

TOXICOLOGY. Candies are loaded with sulphate of baryta, white earth, flour and starch, and the so-called gum-drops, etc., are made largely of cheap gelatine. Avoid cheap, fancy candies, and also all arsenical colors. Paris green, chrome green, chrome yellow and fuchsian are all often employed to color confectionery. Never use such candy. A perfectly pure candy is now the exception, not the rule.

D. L. B. Rochester. Our modern cities and great buildings are by no means as safe as they are made out to be. The world, for Ninotch was fifteen miles long, eight wide, and forty round, with a wall one hundred feet high, and a ditch one hundred fathoms deep. Babylon was fifty miles within the walls, which were seventy-five feet thick, three hundred feet high, and had one hundred brazen gates. The tower of Babel was 360 feet high, and 320 feet to the support of the roof. It was a hundred years in building.

ELLEN L. M. Boston. A young lady who has been waited upon by the table and has had to be in dress. Be thankful you found out his true character in time, put all letters and presents in a package and return, and do not allow any message to be passed between you and him. You should tell him that it is easy to "seem gentlemanly and good," but all men are not what they seem. Be very careful of the you are not to be deceived by the people's antecedents before you admit them to your friendship.

MINE FOR A DAY.

BY JOHNNIE DABB.

Yes, another may claim you for his, Carrie fair,
Another may bear you from me, far away;
But I'll often look back to those short, fleeting
hours,
When you, my dear Carrie, were "mine for a
day."

You remember the place in the cool, shady grove,
By the side of the river, reflecting the blue,
And the birds in the maples were singing of love,
Where both of us promised to each we'd be true.

We were happy then, Carrie, and little we cared
For the time that so silently passed on its way—
We lived a whole life in those few happy hours,
When I was yours only—you, "mine for a day."

Perhaps you will think of the time that is past;
I shall never forget though my locks have turned
gray.
Those short, sunny hours, too happy to last,
When you, fairest Carrie, were mine for a day.

A Life Lesson.

BY LUCILLE HOLLIS.

ALL of Ethel Tyburn's life had conduced to render her weak when the hour of its great temptation should come to her. And come, at length, it had, in the person of Colonel Basil Justine.

They met in this way. Ethel had an errand downtown. It was just lunch-hour when her little business was completed, but would be long after that time before she could reach her home in Harlem; so she stepped for lunch into a French restaurant. It was a cheery, cleanly, petite salon, and Ethel had frequently been there, and was soon placidly sipping a glass of iced claret and enjoying a game pate. While she languidly fanned herself, and looked over a morning's paper, and consumed her dainty meal, and observed the comings and goings of the parties around her, two gentlemen came into the room and seated themselves across from her, so near she could have shaken hands with either and not have moved from her seat.

One of the new-comers was ordinarily tall and well-looking; his companion was above the usual height, and without any especial claims to beauty, yet exceedingly attractive of face and presence. They were both gentlemen of culture and intellect, their expression, manner and conversation bore witness; while the taller was, as unmistakably, a military man and a Southerner.

Ethel, innately an extravagant worshiper of manhood in its highest development of physical beauty; of intelligence, of strength, was pleased with these men, whose brilliant conversation—clever word pictures of well-known persons, witty criticisms of writings and plays and art—was so racy, refreshing, and captivating. It was with reluctance she ate her last bit of pate, settled her check, and departed.

She stood on the corner opposite the new post-office, with all thoughts of her two brilliant companions of the lunch room fled as she viewed the tangle of wheels and hoofs, and vainly sought a passage to a car.

"Pardon me, Miss, but is not this yours?" The Southerner stood at her side, his becoming military mantle only loosely flung on his shoulders because of the warmth of the brilliant September day, his dark, tender brown eyes looking smilingly, half admiringly, down upon her, and the white, shapely, characteristic hand of his clime holding toward her the dainty black and gilded fan and chateleine chain that had become detached from her dress.

"Oh! yes! Thank you!" Ethel answered him with a quick, pleased, upward flash of gray eyes and a surging of blood staining her cheeks.

"Are you trying to cross alone through this blockade? Cannot I assist you? Is it a car you wish?"

"Yes; the Third avenue; a through one, if you would be so kind."

"The very one I am obliged to take! What a delightful coincidence! I hope you think so with me, or I shall feel that you command me to wait for the next."

"Oh! pray do not think any such thing of me." It was almost the only thing Ethel could say, she felt, but was conscious that she had uttered the words with unnecessary warmth. But Colonel Justine was too much the gentleman to make her feel this, and so the acquaintance ripened as an acquaintance is likely to do between a fascinating, polished man of the world and an interesting, inexperienced girl, with inherent coquetry and natural genius enough to render her companionable.

It is a long ride to One Hundred and Nineteenth street. Colonel Justine was going even beyond that, but could walk the few remaining blocks, so accompanied Ethel to the very door of her home. She was conscious that she was sorry to see him depart, as he stood upon the uppermost step and watched his graceful, soldierly form disappearing, and yet felt guilty and ashamed that she had answered to his implied question of when she would be in town again, with a specified time and mention of place.

"I only hope Dick never finds it out, though there certainly was nothing out of the way in it," Ethel said to herself, going up to her room. "He is a man worth knowing; so refined, and well read, and courteous; and how surprised he was when we exchanged cards, and he read, on mine, Mrs. Ethel Tyburn."

Mrs. Ethel Tyburn! Yes, Ethel was married, or this sketch would never have been written; married, and had a little child.

But despite the double bonds of wifehood and motherhood, Ethel drifted into frequent meetings with the colonel. He was spending six weeks in New York before leaving the United States for a prolonged stay in Europe. Before a third of those weeks were gone, the fascinating Southerner had made himself acquainted with all the lights and shades of Ethel Tyburn's character and her twenty years of life. He understood how her natural brilliant and restless nature, and hungry mind, had chafed and revolted against the seclusion, and strictness, and poverty in which she had been reared; how, fed mentally upon all the fiction and poetry she could borrow, she was ready to accept any fate that brought a change to her life. The change came in the person of a lover, whom she secretly married, though yet a child and knowing scarce anything concerning him. He proved a fond husband, and took her to a respectable boarding-house home in the suburbs of the great city in which she had so longed to live; but Colonel Justine suspected, even beyond Ethel's unintentional revelations, how little real affection had had any part in her marriage, how her longings for pleasures, and luxuries, and freedom, and knowledge, had only increased with the one upward move her marriage had been, and how fruitless those longings were, and how galling her thralldom.

Perhaps the man did not deliberately play upon all these feelings; for he was a gentle-

man born and bred. He only enjoyed studying her, and seeing her un concealable liking for himself intensify; he amused himself by amusing her; gave her intelligent, intellectual companionship, and delicate sympathy; and treated her with the tender, watchful chivalry that is at the same time the sweetest devotion and most subtle flattery with which mankind appeals to a woman's passions. The glowing October days were one jubilate dream to Ethel, spent among the riches of art galleries, all the natural beauties about Manhattan Island, and in long wanderings and talks among the flaming autumn glories of the park.

There is an end to all things earthly, however, and so October, with the sweet, doubtful pleasures it had brought to Ethel Tyburn, drew to a close, and the colonel's departure for Europe was near at hand. Ethel met him for that last time, with no dream of the temptation which awaited her, nor the misery which it would evoke. Nor was evil premeditated, though he knew to the full his power, by Basil Justine; let that justice be done the gallant, passionate Southerner. He had come to care, he had not learned how much, for Ethel, and only a freak of fate—more fitly termed an accident—revealed the depth of his love to her and himself, and betrayed him into his sin.

They went for a drive, miles and miles out along the spicy, gorgeous country roads, and both talked into the theme of the farewells that must be uttered that night; yet he was only a man of the world, to whom the first love of his thirty-five years had come; and she a foolish, erring girl, who had until now placed no restrictions upon her regards for him, and had already acted a part that would have lowered her in the eyes of society were it made known. Both fell, after a time, into silence. A scream from Ethel broke it, as, at a touch of the whip, the horse gave a bound that dashed them into horrible proximity with a loaded truck.

Before Mrs. Tyburn opened her eyes, after the crash that followed, she knew she was lying in Basil Justine's arms, felt the wild beating of his heart against her own, and heard him breathing passionately, pleadingly, heart-brokenly:

"Ethel, little darling, open your eyes! Oh, sweetest, sweetest Ethel, my little love, my own, own Ethel, speak to me! Have I killed you, my idol, my queen, my life?"

She lay motionless a moment, in a sweet delirium of pleasure, the color dying from her pallid face, her lips parting in a gasp of delicious surprise, her blood bounding along her veins in throbbing answers to his love. And he knew she had come back to life, and a consciousness of what his words meant, and a had acceptance of their avowal. So, after he had told her that they must accept the hospitalities of the cottage for an hour or two, he let his madness go unchecked; until Ethel Tyburn forewore ties of maternity, and wifehood, and honor, and gave her pledge to meet him at the European steamer next day.

She was weak, nervous, excited, when she parted from Basil Justine a few blocks from home that afternoon; she could not bear the sight of Baby Minnie, when the nurse-girl brought her in the room, and the child begged:

"Mamma, take 'er! Mamma, take 'er!"

"Mamma cannot take you, she is tired. Lucy, carry her down-stairs, and when Mr. Tyburn comes in tell him I have a severe headache and do not wish to be called for dinner. Where is the medicine that stood on the mantel?"

"Mrs. Alliger borrowed it this morning for her headache. It is in her room. I will bring it, ma'am."

Lucy brought a vial of dark mixture, and carried away the baby. Left to herself, Ethel swallowed a good portion of the liquid, was conscious of a feeling of nausea and a return of the deadly faintness that had seized her when thrown from the carriage, and flung herself upon the bed.

Oh! what visions came to her—so horrible! She seemed years and years older, and suffering such tortures! Basil Justine was reviling, and choking and beating her! Over her bent Minnie, grown a woman, with fierces avenging eyes, and loathing on her face, and curses on her lips! And Dick stood near, and laughed with scorn at her cries and supplications, and bade her suffer on until she died, and after, even as she had made him suffer! And then she seemed tossed on billows of flame and was

"Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan!" And at last she gathered strength to open her eyes, and there was Dick kneeling beside her—so thin, so white, with the Auburn curls all pushed in a tangle off his brow, and the blue eyes sad and full of tears.

She recollected nothing, and comprehended nothing, only she heard his solemn:

"Thank God!" as their eyes met; and some instinct of comfort and relief prompted her to put her hands about his neck; but they were too helpless and fell back. He arose and gathered them in his and kissed them. There were no words, Ethel was too weak for speech. After hours of quiet sleep she awoke and thought it was morning, the morning of the day she was to sail for Europe with Colonel Justine.

"Dick," she said, faintly. In an instant he was bending over her.

"I was going away to-day," Dick looked surprised. "And, oh! you will never, never forgive."

"Oh! Ethel, yes, I will! I know all about it, my little girl. Do not talk, Pussie. You must keep very quiet." And she obeyed him thankfully, too weary but contented to wonder, yet, how he could know her secret.

It was weeks before Ethel was strong and well, and learned how she had taken by mistake a dose of elixir of opium that had nearly proved fatal, and from the horrible effects of which she had gone into a dangerous fever. But, little by little, she knew how she had revealed her temptation in her delirious ravings, and also terrible throes of remorse; how Dick had grieved over her, and forgiven her, and been her sole devoted watcher and nurse, she found out by degrees and appreciated more with each day of her life. And, one day, her husband handed her a European-stamped letter. With whitening lips she tore it open, glanced at the few lines, and passed it to Dick.

It was dated in Havre, and said:

"Thank God! Yes, thank God, Ethel, that you changed your mind and did not come to me! Oh! how I have warred with myself; but at last I can write you, in self-abasement, to pardon me the sin I tempted you to do, and to forget me as a true, good woman, such as he and I know you are in soul, should, and may God bless you, little Ethel, the earnest wish of

BASIL JUSTINE."

And God had blessed Ethel Tyburn; and shown her, what many a wife needs to learn, that no theory of Platonism, nor friendship, nor affinities, is safe or sinless unless it comes between a wedded couple, be even the ties that bind them only formality of vows. And so wifehood has come to have its true deep meaning to her who entered it so thoughtlessly and rashly, and she has learned to give reverential

love to the man who lacks the wealth, and culture, and position of her dreamed-of heroes, but is true, tender, devoted, and noble enough to bury in oblivion remembrance of the fault he condoned. And Baby Minnie's mother prays for guidance to make the little one too true and pure a woman ever to know the temptation from which Ethel was saved.

For three better, happier lives "thank God!" and we leave them each—baby, and Dick, and Ethel, and even wandering Basil Justine—with the colonel's wish: "God bless you."

Love in a Maze:

THE DEBUTANTE'S DISENCHANTMENT.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

AUTHOR OF "ALIDA BARRETT, THE SEWING-GIRL," "MADELINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COQUETTE CHAINED.

THE art reception, with its exhibition of paintings, and its choice music, was enjoyed by the elegant fashionables of the "exclusive circles" as well as the lovers of art, and was the greatest success of the season.

Elodie was there and was invited to sing in a duet with a professional vocalist, taking the place of her friend who had not made her appearance.

The compliments paid the young girl upon her performance and the rich mezzo-soprano voice, so rare in one so young, were not so sweet to her ear as the whispered comment of her artist companion.

"You ought to sing in public, with such a voice."

Her face became irradiated. She longed to ask the speaker to let her come to her for advice; but she could not immediately gather courage, and in a moment the opportunity was lost. How bitterly she felt her thralldom, and how stout grew her determination to have her freedom!

The famous "Count del Raggio" was clamorously called upon for one song after another. Obeying the summons and thanking his friends in a brief speech, he took occasion to disclaim the name a few friends had bestowed on him by way of a joke.

The Italian birth attributed to him, also, he must deny, with all due respect for that glorious land of song, where he had sojourned for many years. As Herbert St. Clare, Virginian by birth—New Yorker by residence—he was happy to receive their kind encomiums; due, he thought, more to their partiality than to his merits, and he hoped to number many among his attached friends.

Emily felt prouder of him than ever.

When he gave her his arm for the promenade she did not heed the glances of her acquaintances, nor the whispers of ladies who guessed how matters stood with the pair so devoted to each other.

Wyndham nodded smilingly to him as he went to join the circle round Miss Seaforth.

She seemed unusually brilliant this evening. Nearest to her stood the gallant General Marsh, whose eyes appeared liberally to devour her face, and whose glances spoke the love of a devoted suitor.

This kind of attention Ruhama was quite accustomed to receive; and she was pleased with it. She liked the homage of a living, loving heart; and was accustomed to give glances in return that kindled hopes she never meant to fulfill.

On one occasion after another she might be seen in a recess, half-curtained, listening to love-vows softly whispered; her eyes drooping till the dark lashes lay upon her cheek; her face wearing the hue of "love's flower"; the picture of a tender maiden, whose awakened heart was on the eve of surrendering itself. The beguiled suitor would fancy himself a conqueror.

But when the white lids were lifted, the dark, Oriental eyes shot forth a gleam of merriment, that speedily dispelled his dreams.

This was one phase of "flirtation" with the belle. Another was to surround herself with admiring beaux, each waiting a gleam that should carry an electric message to his heart, ready to be laid at her feet. She would keep a dozen in this kind of expectancy; and send a thrill to a dozen eager souls in rapid succession. Each would imagine himself the one favored by stealth; the sole recipient of the magnetism of those wonderful eyes.

This evening was the last she ever enjoyed of the unalloyed pleasures of coquetry. She stood in peerless beauty, wearing her favorite dress of delicate lemon-colored silk, with profuse trimmings of white point d'aiguilles, and pearls on her neck and in her hair.

Never had she been more conscious of the power of her charms. It seemed as if the arrows of the very god of love lay in the depths of her matchless eyes. She had bewitched at least a score, and as they stood round her, watching with eagerness for a word or a smile, from the lovely idol of their worship, she felt herself the "cynosure of neighboring eyes," and the acknowledged queen of love and beauty.

Tom Wyatt, who fitted in and out of her circle, was the only one who was not manifestly her slave; and on him she turned, ever and anon, the battery of her alluring looks. Twice he asked her to dance; but she declined on the plea of fatigue; she preferred to be the center of such homage as she was receiving.

That night she drank to the full the intoxicating cup a vain coquette finds so sweet. What bitter draughts were to be drained in the unknown future!

Ruhama and Wyndham exchanged glances, as he came near her. On him she had never practiced the arts of coquetry. She had always fancied reproach in his eyes when he fixed them upon her in that way. Yet she would have valued approval from him more than admiration from the others.

How long it seemed since she had enjoyed those confidential interviews with young Blount, so dear to her memory, when he had wanted the monopoly of her thoughts! She had power then to disturb—even to distress him, by her flirtations with others. What had come between them, absorbing his attention, till his eyes no longer sent fire-glances into hers, his face no longer flushed or paled according to her humors!

Involuntarily her eyes swept the spacious hall, and lighted on a youthful form full of little grace leaning against one of the pillars.

Elodie was watching the singer, already mentioned, as she placed herself at the harp, while her fingers strayed over its strings.

The girl's face, with its rapt expression, was more beautiful than Ruhama had ever seen it. There was a rosy color in her cheeks, and her blue eyes were full of eager attention; her hands were clasped; her bosom was heaving with emotion.

And Wyndham stood watching her! Yes; he whom all knew to be sensitive to beauty and

grace had his eyes fixed on this lovely creature—this child of genius—with an interest that was manifest in every lineament!

If there is a moment that can dash with bitterness the triumphs of a coquette, as the lightning shrivels the flower, it is that in which she discovers the chain worn by one of her victims rent asunder by the hand of a rival!

In that moment Ruhama almost hated the girl. Could it be possible that Wyndham, whose devotion she had fancied was all her own whenever she chose to claim it, had bestowed his affection on this waif, this rude child thrown so strangely on his protection?

She watched him with a jealous pang at her heart. She saw that his eyes did not wander from the object of his attention, till the harp had ended her song. Then, while the hall rang with applause, Ruhama saw him go up to Elodie, draw her arm within his, and lead her away. At the same instant Ruhama felt hers drawn within that of General Marsh, and heard him say they must go in to supper.

The coquette laughed to think how much she had been disturbed by this little incident. She thought of Olive, and her warnings, and sighed to feel how unsatisfactory were the triumphs of gratified vanity. Had Wyndham really been unmoved by her fascinations? She resolved to rivet his chains more firmly than ever. No word of love had ever passed between them; but she had felt certain of his attachment. Did she love him? No, certainly not; but she had prized the evidence of his regard; and she felt wronged to see it withdrawn.

He passed near her as she stood in the supper-room; and she whispered in his ear that she might be induced to honor him in one of the first waltzes when they should return to the ball.

Looking gravely in her face, with perfect self-possession, Wyndham thanked her, but regretted that he would not be able to avail himself of her kind favor.

"How can that be?" she asked, frowning.

"I have promised my mother to take her and Elodie home directly after supper."

"The old lady and the child," returned Ruhama, with satirical emphasis, "must not be kept out late."

Wyndham looked at her in surprise. She laughed gayly, and asked if he had given up his liberty, that he could not remain for what he once protested was best worth waiting for!

Something about "business deferred," writing to do, etc., fell on her ears, and filled her with displeasure she did not attempt to conceal.

Tom Wyatt came up on the other side, and preferred his modest petition for the dance after supper.

Ruhama smiled brightly on him, while she flung an angry look after Wyndham, which he did not seem to feel, as they moved with the throng toward the hall, where the dancers had already taken their places.

With all her wealth of attraction, and the lavish homage paid her, Ruhama felt poor. She saw her cousin Herbert and his affianced love standing before one of the paintings, intent only on each other.

Happy Emily! she had tasted none of the luxuries served to a belle, but she had been faithful to love, and enjoyed its fruition.

Why, Miss Seaforth thought, could she not have a true heart waiting for her, when she had done with her butterfly-sipping of sweets? Wyndham had already left the hall with his charge. Again she sighed, and a feeling of disgust with herself and her career crept over her.

It was late when she reached home that night, attended by the faithful lover, General Marsh, who did not, as usual, enter the house.

The banker, Mr. Seaforth, was passing the library, the door of which stood open. As his daughter came into the house, he went into the hall, took her hand, and drew her into the library.

"Oh, papa! you up so late! No—I cannot stop. My maid is waiting to undress me, and I am tired to death."

"Come in for five minutes. I have something to say."

"Is it anything particular? Won't it keep till to-morrow?"

"I would rather say it to-night. You shall talk it over to-morrow with both of us, if you like."

"Both? What do you mean?"

"General Marsh came home with you?"

"Certainly; he has been very attentive all the evening. What a good old soul he is! He took care of me as if he had been my own papa."

"He is not so old, my child; by no means as old as myself!"

"Papa! he looks older by five years!"

"Not at all; you must not fancy any such thing!"

"Well, we will not dispute about it. Good-night, papa, dear."

"Stay, my daughter. I want to tell you—I received a proposal of marriage for you to-day."

"A proposal!" Ruhama gave one of her musical, rippling laughs. "Who could he be; who was old fashioned enough to go to my father before coming to me with his suit?"

"One belonging to the good old school, my child; and the better and nobler for it."

"Not—not—"

"The General! Yes, it was he! You must have seen that he is deeply in love with you."

"Oh, father, so old as he is!"

"I tell you he is not past the prime of life. He is handsome, and full of spirit; accomplished, highly educated; a man of society, and possessed of a splendid fortune."

"Too good, by half, for poor little me!" cried the girl, with another laugh.

"He loves you; he offers you his name—an honored name—and his wealth."

The girl made a sweeping curtsey—still laughing.

"And you declined the honor for me, like a dear, good papa, with graceful thanks?"

"Ruhama! I gave my consent with joy. I hope yours will follow."

"Dear father, you cannot wish me to marry so unsuitably?"

"How unsuitably? In what personal or mental quality is he deficient?"

"Oh, I find no fault with him; he is well enough—for any one who would like him. But I never could fancy him for a husband."

"Ruhama, you have received his attentions for weeks past. What did you mean by it?"

"Only a little harmless flirtation."

"Girl, he has interpreted it to mean encouragement of his addresses."

"But, papa, I have flirted with twenty others at the same time."

"The more shame on you! But you have encouraged General Marsh in particular, and have committed yourself."

"Papa, now you are absurd! A girl cannot commit herself till she is asked to marry. Coquetry is allowable before that."

"It is you who are absurd, Ruhama. You have led General Marsh to believe you favored

his suit; I have accepted it. I expect you to marry him."

"That, papa, is what I cannot do."

"Ruhama, I am speaking seriously. Sit down there."

The girl obeyed, but her face wore an expression of determination, which the banker now set himself to overcome.

"You force me, child, to disclose what I meant to keep a secret. I am on the verge of ruin—of bankruptcy!"

"Father!" exclaimed the girl, growing pale as death.

"I speak the truth, and it is a bitter struggle to speak it! I have striven for months to ward off the blow, which I knew would crush you. But it must come! This house, with furniture and carriage must be given up. In another month we shall be paupers."

Ruhama, stricken to the soul, rose and knelt by her father's chair. Her hands clasped his arm; her terrified eyes looked into his. Horror seemed to freeze her blood.

"I know what you would say, child; you thought me secure in my wealth; so do others; but the truth must soon come out, unless you will save me!"

He turned his face on one side, his features working with emotion.

"Save you! How can I save you?"

"Daughter, you can if you will! General Marsh stands ready to advance as many thousands as I require to stave over this crisis. He would replace the funds I have lost by Stevenson and the Brothers Merke."

"He would buy my hand of you!" exclaimed the girl, bitterly.

"I swear to you, Ruhama, he has never named the loan in connection with you; he is too high-toned a gentleman."

"Let him rescue you, then, without binding me."

"Do you think I could accept the assistance I must have, to set me on a safe ground, from any but a favored lover of my child's? No; if you will not confirm my assurance to him, I am lost."

"Your assurance?"

"I pledged my word that you would marry him, girl. I thought myself sure of your consent."

"Papa, this is not the age or country when girls are bestowed by parents against their own wishes."

"I know it, child! Well—you are free to disappoint—to ruin me! The sooner the worst comes the better!"

He stooped his head on his hands, and his breast heaved with sobs. Ruhama had never seen him thus moved.

"Oh, papa, papa!" she sobbed, clinging to him. "Do not break my heart!"

"You had better retire now," he said, coldly, suppressing his emotion, and unclasping her arms from his neck.

He rose from his seat, and as the girl caught a glimpse of his face, she saw on it the impress of despair.

She rushed after him as he crossed the room.

"Oh, papa, where are you going?"

"No matter. I cannot sleep to-night. I must look over these papers. You may go to your rest."

The forced calmness with which he spoke showed how utterly hopeless he was, and his hands trembled as he handled the papers on the table. No words could have so deeply affected Ruhama.

"I will not leave you in this way, papa."

Then, catching her breath with a convulsive gasp, she suddenly seized his arm.

Wyndham made no answer. "And you know," pursued the girl, "if I lose that I must earn my living." "Poor child, it has not come to that." "But it may; and it is only right I should be prepared. I ought to earn it by music, if I have as much talent as they say." "Your talent shall be cultivated, Elodie; I promise you that." "But I cannot pay for lessons if my money is all taken away." "Leave that to me." "You have not found the certificate that was missing?" "Not yet."

"If Mr. Rasleigh stole it I know he must have destroyed it. You will never find it. And he claims the property, you said." "I am sorry you learned anything about the matter, child."

"Why should you be? I can help you. Be sure you will never find a paper Mr. Rasleigh has stolen. He is too cunning."

"I am afraid you are right." "Then I must lose the money. His son is the next heir, I heard you say."

"Did you ever see that young man?" "Oh, yes; Mr. Rasleigh used to bring him home sometimes. He is in the asylum where they teach imbeciles. He is not aunt Letty's son, you know."

"Yes, I know that." "I never liked him; I never would play with him, though Mr. Rasleigh tried to make me. He used to say I should be Godfrey's little wife, some day."

"Ah!" "That was what gave me such a dislike to the boy; for I knew his father was in earnest."

"He really wished you to marry his son?" "I am sure of it. When aunt Letty was lying dead, and you had said you would take me home, I heard him say that."

"Indeed! Did any other person hear it?" "Only the negro woman."

"It would go to prove that he thought you the lawful heir," said Wyndham, musingly. "Where is the woman, Nelly?"

"Is she not at the old place?" "No; she left there immediately after Mrs. Rasleigh's death."

"Then I do not know where she is. She said she would come and see me."

"It was unpardonably negligent in me not to give her my address. But she could get it from her master."

"Yes, if he chose to give it to her." "But she must have left his service. Have you any idea where her home is, or her friends?"

"No, I know nothing of them. She never left my aunt."

"I wonder if it would do any good to advertise for her?" mused young Blount.

"She was fond of me, and I should like to see her," said Elodie. "But, guardy, we are wandering from the question. If I am to have no fortune I must be put in the way of earning a livelihood at once."

"Are you in haste to leave us?" asked Wyndham, smiling at her.

Elodie was given to speaking the truth bluntly.

"I am, indeed," she answered.

Her guardian was visibly hurt.

"I hoped you were happy here," he said, in a voice that showed pain. "I am sure I have striven to make you feel like one of us—and Emily has been like an elder sister to you."

Elodie dashed away the tears that were overflowing her eyes.

"You must not think me ungrateful for your kindness," she said. "I am grateful—I bless you for it. Who besides you would have been so good to a poor orphan girl?"

"You must not talk so, child. You are like a sister to us."

"But I know your mother and sister will feel it a relief to part with me."

"Elodie!"

"Did I not hear Emily say she would not like to appear in society with a girl of doubtful birth?" questioned the girl, looking unflinchingly in the lawyer's face. "I do not blame her; I should feel just so."

"You are not of doubtful birth, Elodie."

"I know you think so; and I am sure of it myself; but the world will demand proof of my honorable parentage; and if you have to go through a suit for my property it cannot fail to come out that my mother's marriage cannot be proved. Is it not so?"

"It is so, certainly; but—"

"Then it will be in all the papers, and everybody will know that the girl you have taken to your home, and treated like a sister, cannot prove her birth lawful, and has lost her property in consequence. So that you will have not only poverty, but disgrace, on your hands."

"Elodie, you must leave such things to wiser and older persons. You are too young to be troubled with them."

"No; I am not too young to see my own position, and to seek the means of bettering it."

Wyndham was now pacing the floor in his perplexity and distress. Presently he stopped, close to the girl, and took her little hand in his own.

"Let this matter rest, I entreat you, my child. Confide in me."

"Oh, dear Mr. Blount, I cannot let you bear all my burden! You must let me have my way!"

"What is it you want? To leave this house?" "Yes, to leave it and be placed at once in a situation where I can earn a salary, if ever so small—and be improving daily in my singing. Madame Ferretti said I could have an engagement to sing in a chorus, and in a few months take a part. Oh, I long to be at work! I shall die if I stay here, doing nothing toward accomplishing my great object!"

"You are ambitious, Elodie, and do not see the perils and difficulties that beset such a life!"

"I know them all, and I am ready to contend with them. Only let me go!"

For some minutes the young lawyer made no answer. At last he said, turning to the eager suppliant:

"I should not be doing my duty toward you, Elodie, nor fulfilling my promise to your aunt, if I should comply with your wish. You are under age, and incapable of judging for yourself."

She covered her face with her hands, and wept and sobbed vehemently.

Wyndham quietly took her arm and led her to the door.

"Good-night, Elodie," he said. "It is very late; you must retire."

"You treat me like a wayward child," she faltered, through her tempest of weeping. "But I am not a child! And be sure, sir, I shall not stay here while the suit is going on for my property! I have been scorned enough as it is."

"No one scorns you," replied Wyndham. "We all love you, and would protect and serve you. You will think better of this to-morrow. Go now; and let me have some rest."

He stooped and lightly touched her forehead with his lips.

It was the first time he had ever caressed the girl, and the action seemed to humble her rash pride. She gave him one wistful glance, then burst into a fresh flood of tears, and fled up-stairs with the speed of one terrified.

When she had reached her own room she locked the door and throwing herself on the bed cried till she fell asleep.

Wyndham remained long in his study, absorbed in painful thought. He began to realize that he had undertaken no light task, in the care of a willful girl, possessed of genius and determined to make her independent way in the world.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 281.)

Yellowstone Jack:

OR,
THE TRAPPERS OF THE ENCHANTED GROUND.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S-EYE, THE LIGHTNING SHOT OF THE PLAINS," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.
RETRIBUTION.

VERNON CAMPBELL and John Warren hastened down the canon at a rapid pace, for both knew the value of time, though the emigrant could think of little else than his lost child, eager, yet dreading to hear the truth from Ada.

The scout was afraid that some of the savages posted among the hills would hear the alarm, and advance toward the spot to discover its meaning. Were they to do this, and catch them while still upon the ledge, there could be no result. Instead of rescuing Ada from her perilous position, all three would be sacrificed.

Still he did not flinch from the trial, and assisting Warren to the narrow ledge, he led the way with the utmost speed consistent with safety. At times they were forced to cling to the face of the rock wall, and thus slip along a foot at a time. It didn't seem possible that a feeble girl could have traversed such a trail, yet, at one of the most difficult spots, Campbell found a few fluttering threads that Warren recognized as having formed part of the dress worn by Ada on the preceding day.

Hasten as they might, fully an hour was occupied in traversing the ledge to the point where the scout's too fatal aim had killed Eagle while nobly keeping his pledge.

Campbell drew back, a finger upon his lips. "Be cautious—she is there, and seems to be either sleeping or in a faint. If awakened suddenly, like as not she will rush over the ledge before she knows it, thinking you are an enemy. Creep past me, and stand so you can catch her if she springs up."

John Warren obeyed, and then called the maiden by name. She did not answer, but lay still and motionless as though dead. A wild fear assailing him, he stepped forward and grasped her arm. With a low cry of terror, the girl awoke, and struggled desperately to free herself. Only for Campbell's precautions, another tragedy would have occurred. As it was, Ada soon recognized her uncle, and sunk sobbing upon his breast, nor could she answer his questions for some minutes. She had been sorely overtaken, since the bursting of the powder, and when she saw her guide and protector hurried over the ledge to death, she fell back in a deathlike swoon. From that she fortunately sunk into a heavy sleep, for her half-distracted condition, she would have fled from the terrible spot, only to fall a victim to her agitation along that perilous trail.

"Wait until we get up to the level ground," impatiently said Campbell, checking the emigrant in his incoherent questions. "We are in danger here, and if discovered good-by to our lives as well as the hope of regaining your daughter. By that time, too, the young lady will be more composed and better able to tell you her story. Come—let us go."

The young scout lent Ada what assistance she needed, with a quiet respect that was very grateful. But they were fated not to reach the upper end without interruption.

A wild yell came from below—one of agony the most intense, followed by a burst of devilish laughter. The men interchanged glances. The same thought could be read in their eyes. They believed the shriek came from the lips of Frank Maynard.

"We can do him no good now," muttered Campbell, gloomily. "T'would be all over before we could return. Besides, he is a man; and we have a helpless woman here to save. We must push on. Those sounds will draw some of the varmints to the spot, and if meet them we must, better on ground where we can make some show of fight. Here, they would massacre us."

"It seems cowardly to leave him—and he utterly helpless," muttered John Warren, wiping his brow.

"We will return and avenge him. We can do nothing more."

A few minutes later they reached the spot where, on the preceding day, Pethonista had assisted the fugitives to descend, and Campbell, ascending first, lifted the others up to the other ledge, then upon the flat rock where the wagon had been upset. Though much the shortest way, Campbell did not deem it prudent to venture along the pass, for he felt sure that it was still watched by the Blackfeet. So, with some little difficulty he managed to pass beyond the point of rocks, and soon reached easier journeying. By making this *détour* he hoped to avoid all collision with the enemy, and reach the small plain at a point where the emigrants could easily rescue them by a dash, in case the enemy should attempt their capture on leaving cover.

As Ada could scarcely move one foot before another, the emigrant raised her in his strong arms, and the party progressed more rapidly. Thus placed more at ease, Ada briefly told her story, describing as well as she was able, the man who had parted her from Minnie.

"It's Mat Mole—the man who has followed you so far," said Campbell. "There is one comfort in it, though. Her life is safe in his hands. For some reason, I know not what, he means to make her his wife. He gave up all claim to the booty, only stipulating for her, and he repeatedly cautioned his men against

harming a single hair of her head. So cheer up, old man. Your daughter shall be restored to you, if mortal man can do it. I owe the snake a grudge, anyhow, for leading me into such a foul business, and I'll run him to earth if it takes a year," warmly declared the young scout.

"Not much ye won't—cuss ye!" yelled a harsh voice from the rocks, and a rifle cracked sharply.

Vernon Campbell pitched heavily forward upon his face.

"Whooray! that's your rip-roarin' blood-drinker, throwed flat as a flounder! At 'em, Injuns—kill the old cuss but spar the gal!" added the voice, and then a burly white man leaped down from his covert among the rocks, while four Indians closely followed him.

"God help us now!" groaned Warren, as he dropped Ada and leveled his rifle at the yelling enemy.

As his rifle spoke, two of them fell; the white man and an Indian. Warren stared in surprise, for he had not aimed at the former. But a voice beside him quickly explained all.

"Out revolver and at 'em! Give 'em glory!" Campbell bounded past him, the hot blood streaming down his face, his revolver speaking rapidly. The Indians faltered, then paused. This man inspired them with an intense terror. It seemed as though he bore a charmed life. A score of times they had made sure he was slain, but as often had he returned to life and his vengeance.

One, two, three swiftly succeeding shots; and then one Indian turned to flee. Before he had run ten yards, a leaden messenger overtook him, stopping his earthly career forever. And then arose the terrible cry of the avenger, loud, shrill, triumphant. But the next moment he was the cool, quiet-mannered man Warren best knew.

"They bucked against the wrong persons that time, stranger," he said, carelessly. "But just take a look at this carrion. Now do you believe what I told you of your trusted guide?"

As he turned over the body of the fallen white with his foot the pain-distorted features of Chris Camp were revealed. A small, discolored spot in his forehead told where the messenger of death had entered.

"We owe our lives to you," huskily uttered the emigrant.

"That's one good deed, then, to offset a score of evil ones," lightly replied the young scout, yet grasping the proffered hand.

"I believed you dead, when you fell so suddenly."

"Just quarter of an inch from it," laughed Campbell, touching the wound upon his temple, where the bone was laid bare. "It knocked me down, but I managed to drop this sucker in time. But come—we are losing time. Our little by-play here will be apt to draw more of the varmints around, and I wouldn't like the lady to fall into their hands again."

Warren again lifted Ada, who was now a sort of stuper. Both body and mind were utterly exhausted. Campbell dextrously reloaded the empty firearms as they strode along, but they were not called upon to use them again, though once they caught sight of several Indians. If themselves seen, they were not pursued, and an hour later entered the corral.

While Warren was busy attending to Ada, Campbell briefly told what had occurred and asked for volunteers to return to the canon, to rescue Frank Maynard, or if dead, to give his body Christian burial and take what vengeance they could upon his murderers. As one man the emigrants stepped forward, for the young man was a general favorite, but Campbell did not deem it prudent to weaken the train much, so he only selected three men. These he believed would be enough, since his object was to avoid, rather than court, a collision with the enemy.

Campbell, partly because it was the most direct route, partly because he did not think it prudent to return by the point where the traitor guide and his copper-skinned allies had met their death, lest the sound of firearms had attracted others of the enemy, led the way round by the upper end of the canon, following almost directly upon the footsteps of the emigrant.

Knowing that if the wounded he had heard really came from the wounded he was beyond all earthly aid long ere this, the scout guided his men cautiously along, taking advantage of every bit of cover, not knowing how many enemies might be before them.

They had not followed the canon for more than a few hundred yards before they were interrupted by faint cries and screams from ahead. There could be no mistaking this. It was the complaints of some one who was being subjected to torture. Though expressing intense agony, the voice seemed that of one well-nigh exhausted.

"There's the devil's own work going on there," muttered Campbell, hoarsely. "And I, for one, mean to see what it means. You fellows can wait here until I return or you hear from me, if you'd rather."

"We'll keep with you," said Russell. "Perhaps it's Maynard."

"Look to your weapons, then; but don't burn powder until I give the word," hurriedly added the scout, as he trailed his rifle and resumed his progress.

A few more minutes sufficed to carry them to the point from whence the torture could first be seen, and the entire party abruptly halted, fairly sickening with horror and disgust.

The naked body of a human being was suspended by the feet to a pine tree, his hands bound firmly to the trunk, so that he was held motionless, head downward. Before him stood a wild, blood-stained figure, flourishing a keen knife, with which he was literally flaying the unhappy wretch alive, by inches at a time! Long strips of skin swayed to and fro as the bare muscles quivered with the torture. The victim was a mass of blood from head to foot. His voice was faint and weak. Evidently his race was well-nigh run.

"Keep under cover," Campbell muttered to his men. "I believe I know both those men. If so, our young friend may be safe yet. Still, I'm going to stop this torture."

Drawing a revolver, the scout glided rapidly yet noiselessly forward, keeping behind the madman, who was too busily engaged in his long deferred vengeance to take heed of aught else, and then Campbell dealt him a quick, heavy stroke upon the back of his head with the brass-bound revolver butt that felled him like an ox in the shambles.

"Come up, lads, and help me loose this poor devil, though I don't suppose you'll feel much sympathy for him when you know it's Mat Mole, the same one who has brought all your trouble upon you. Still, he is a human creature, and shall die in such peace as he can find here."

The moaning wretch was gently lowered to the blood-stained ground, and then Campbell added:

"Dose him with a little of the whisky you brought for your friend; if possible, I want

him to answer me a few questions. Do the best you know how, while I go see if young Maynard is all right."

Campbell found Frank in a sort of stupor. The horrible cries and sounds from without, unable as he was to learn their cause or purport, had thrown him back not a little. Campbell saw that the young man was in for a serious fit of illness that nothing save close attention and tender nursing could bring him through, if indeed it did not prove fatal, in his shattered state.

Fearing lest Mole should die too soon, the scout hastened to question him, sending Russell to look after Frank. But all was useless. The outlaw was rapidly sinking from loss of blood. He was already insensible to pain, and a few minutes later drew his final breath.

The giant, bound hand and foot, sat near, greedily watching his victim, though the fire of insanity had left his eyes. He had already told the emigrants what fearful cause he had for hating the outlaw, and in his past sufferings they saw much to palliate his cruel ingenuity as displayed before their eyes in the half-flayed body of Mat Mole.

Campbell had learned what a sad error he had made in shooting the Eagle for an enemy, and buried his mangled corpse in a deep cleft, covering it with boughs, rocks and earth. In another spot the outlaw was buried.

Then a rude litter was made, and Maynard placed upon it. The giant, who seemed now another person, since the outlaw's death, was unbound, and though watched, quietly walked beside the rest.

The wounded man was safely conveyed to the corral, where he was greeted as one risen from the dead. But he still remained buried in that deep, heavy stupor that looked like death.

CHAPTER XIX.

YELLOWSTONE JACK IS ASTONISHED.

It was with a sensation of unutterable horror that Yellowstone Jack felt himself dragged into the Boiling Spring by the weird woman, but the catastrophe could not be avoided, struggle as he might. And then he felt the bony fingers of the hag clutching and tearing at his flesh like the claws of some infuriated animal. His eyes ached and smarted with the water—he felt suddenly blinded. He seemed to be suffocating. He struck vigorously, but the hands of the weird woman still clung to him, seeming to be dragging him down—down!

Half crazed, he grappled with his strange antagonist; for a time he seemed tearing at her throat; then all was blank—a heavy blackness seemed to settle upon his brain.

A dim, peculiar light—like the "shadow of a light"—then slowly dawned upon him. A strangely sweet sound came indistinctly to his ears, drowning the painful ringing in them. Wild visions seemed to float before him, alluring, tantalizing. But when he strove to grasp them, he found his limbs powerless. A spell seemed upon him. And yet he could move his eyes, he could breathe; the atmosphere was warm, there was a peculiar odor perceptible. What did it all mean? Could this be the "other world"? Was he dead? If not, then where was he?

No, Yellowstone Jack was not dead, though for some time he was in great doubts upon this point. But then as his brain grew clearer, the unearthly sweet sound changed to the voice of some one singing a plaintive air not great distance, and he could see that he was beneath the ground, his feet still lying in the water.

"Some one spoke business, I reckon," the scout muttered, uneasily, feeling at his belt; then as he found his knife still in its sheath, he gained more confidence. "Black Harris whipped one on 'em w' a knife, an' I reckon I'm good a man as he is; anyway, I'll make it as lively as I kin for 'em, if they think to play off any o' their tricks on me."

The singing had now ceased, and Yellowstone could just distinguish two voices, as though in conversation. Drawing his knife, he crept forward as silently as possible. His progress was almost immediately checked by what seemed to be a rock-wall. The voices appeared to pass through this. Yet, as he carefully felt of the obstruction, he found it gradually, reiterated upon either hand, like an enormous column. Following up the right hand curve, the trapper found the light steadily increasing in brilliancy; then he abruptly paused, with difficulty checking an exclamation of wondering surprise.

And truly 'twas a strange scene that met his gaze.

A rude, gourd-shell lamp was suspended in the air, casting a flickering, uncertain light around. The floor here, that had been gradually rising ever since Yellowstone Jack left the water's edge, was elevated nearly to the height of his head. The walls were hung with skins, furs, articles of Indian dress and use, various kinds of weapons, such as bows and arrows, hatchets, knives and even rifles. But these obtained only a cursory glance from the trapper.

Seated upon a pile of furs, were two human beings—or "spooks," as the superstitious trapper devoutly believed—conversing together. Though widely-differing types, they were both beautiful—in that flickering light, startlingly so. Blonde and *brune*; the one dressed in civilized costume, though sadly worn and frayed, the other in Indian dress, beaded, embroidered and feather-worked. This last, Yellowstone Jack had seen before. She it was who had sent him the warning note.

"You sigh," suddenly said the *brune*, in a clear, musical voice that strangely thrilled the listening trapper.

"And can you wonder—after what I have told you? Just think what has occurred since yesterday morning! The storm—the frightful runaway and rescue from what seemed certain death—then he was murdered!"

"Do not weep," soothingly uttered the other, caressing the soft, brown locks of her companion. "At least your life is spared."

"And for what? Better had you let that fearful woman kill me at once—what have I to live for now? Nothing—all are dead—all murdered! And I am here—"

With one friend, at least, lady. Mother had said so—at their worst when the moon is full—but I can do anything with her. Now that I have claimed you as a friend, she will never lift finger against you. We will try and make you happy until you can be restored to your friends."

"I have none—they are all dead—murdered!"

"Perhaps not. They were strong in numbers and courage. They may have defeated the Indians. I asked mother to learn what was the result, when she went forth this morning. She should have returned before this. Perhaps I can see her."

Yellowstone Jack saw the girl move toward him, and shrunk back tremblingly. He was not yet fully assured of her being mortal flesh and blood. She did not follow him. Instead he heard a faint, creaking noise; and then, a moment later, the figure reappeared, seemingly excited about something.

"There's a man outside—perhaps the very one who treated you so rudely," she whispered, breathlessly, yet distinctly.

"Brindle Joe, I'll bet a mule!" thought Yellowstone, and his courage rose wonderfully. "Ef she kin git out, so kin I. Ef they're spooks, then they know I'm here, an' if they ain't, I reckon I'm man enough to han'le two gal-critters."

Reasoning thus, the trapper stepped boldly forward, confronting the women. Both shrunk back, but the darkest one quickly clutched a bow and pointed a feathered shaft full at the heart of the intruder. Yellowstone Jack did not flinch, though he held up his empty hands in token of amity.

"I don't mean either on ye no harm, ledies. 'f I'd a' hed my way, I wouldn't a' come in a' tall. Fact is I was brung hyar mighty aginst my will."

"Who are you—what do you want?" demanded the *brune*.

"I'm a man—leastwise I try to be one. Folks call me Yellowstone Jack, though my old man an' woman they called me John Henery Andrew Jackson Harvey. As to 'other question, that's easier answered. I want out."

At this moment there came a dull, thumping sound from the wall behind Yellowstone Jack, and turning quickly, he started back with a low cry, involuntarily drawing his knife.

A shadowy figure brushed past him and sunk down upon the pallet of skins, with a faint moan. It was that of the weird woman, who had dragged the trapper into the spring.

"Mother!" cried the dark maiden, kneeling beside her.

"Peace, child—you can do me no good. The shades are gone now, and I can see things clearly. I am dying—there! Why should you cry out and start back like that? Did I not say I was going to rest—to peace and everlasting repose? Blessed be the hand that sends me rest at last!"

"Mother, you are bleeding—what could—"

"Peace, Kate, you've bayed your aid, and I thank God that it is so. And you, stranger," she added, feebly beckoning to Yellowstone, "come nearer. I know you now, for an honest trapper, for I am no longer mad. I believe I can trust you—I must—there is no one else."

"Hold my hand, Kittie, pet—I am sinking fast. I can feel a dropping, dropping here—in my heart—that tells me my minutes are numbered. Dry your tears—why do you weep at my good fortune? And they pain me, too. I would not like to leave you weeping. And listen—I have much I would like to tell you before I go home."

"F you swaller a little o' this it'll give ye strength," ventured Yellowstone, producing a small leather flask of whisky; some of which he had procured at the train.

"Thanks—I may need it. Now, Kittie, listen."

The dying woman in a faint, husky voice thus told the story of her life; a sad, mournful tale of sin and suffering. The reader will not require its repetition here, since portions of it have already been recorded. She was the sister of Bob Harris, the wife of Jethro Cowles, the woman who ran away with Mat Mole—or Zenas Kallioch, as he was really named. Tiring of her finally, he sold her to Neepaughweese, the mutilated giant chief of the Blackfeet, and when she reproached him with what she had given up for his sake, he struck her a brutal blow that unsettled her brain. Shortly after she fled from the Indians, taking with her a captive called Kittie, who, for several years, had called her mother, who, indeed, had never known other kindred.

"No, you are not my child, Kittie, though I have ever loved you as though you were," the dying woman added. "I do not really know who you are, though the Blackfeet believed you the sister of the white man they call the Blood-drinker. At least you were captured at the same time with him, while almost an infant, and Neepaughweese, whose favorite squaw had just lost her first-born, preserved you to take its place."

"You have an honest face," turning abruptly to the trapper. "I have no one else to look to. Can I trust you?"

"I reckon you kin. I don't brag much in the way o' bein' a good man, but this I kin say, I never stole another feller's traps or furs, unless maybe 'twas an Injune's. I never killed a livin' critter 'cept in fair fight. I never—"

"I will—must—trust you. These helpless beings—will you—protect and—try to restore them—to—"

"I'll do my best," quietly responded Yellowstone.

"Kittie—my child—your hand. It's growing dark—ah—"

Her head fell back. The weird woman was dead.

Kittie flung herself upon the corpse, weeping bitterly.

Minnie gently motioned to Jack, and drew aside. She anxiously questioned him, and great was her joy when he assured her that her father was still alive and well. And when the trapper went on to tell how he had left friends about to rescue Ada, how they had found Frank May

hyar alone. Tell her she will be wi' good friends; besides, the old laddy wished it. Go now, while I take a look outside."

It was nearly an hour before Minnie could get Kittie to listen to reason, and then only by repeating the last wishes of the dead. But at length she raised her head.

"I will obey, since she wished it, though it is like tearing the very heart from my body to leave her and this place. I was happy here for years. She was ever kind and gentle toward me, even when the bad spell was upon her. And now—dead—dead!"

"She is better off," softly uttered Minnie. "You heard her say that she welcomed death as a happy release from a living death."

The body was composed and wrapped in the furs that had often served as its bed. What tomb so secure, so fitting, as that in which she had found refuge for so long?

Kittie knelt, with Minnie, and breathed a prayer for the repose of the dead, and then signified her readiness to depart.

Passing through the square aperture, Kittie raised the cover and secured the spring that held it in place. And the tomb of the weird woman—of the Witch of the Enchanted Valley, was forever closed, never to be entered again by mortal being.

Yellowstone Jack and Brindie Joe gallantly assisted the women to descend, and then the quartette, with the keen-eyed trapper in advance, started for the emigrants' camp.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 278.)

Tiger Dick: OR, THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

That night Charley Brewster, the detective and his men floated down the Mississippi, and then struck off into the country, until they came to a rocky waste. Here, after much careful maneuvering, the detective introduced his men into a cave; and all their wariness and caution were rewarded by an opportunity to stand and look at each other and at the bare rock walls, by the light of dark lanterns.

Then, with a flush on his cheek, the detective uttered the one word:

"Sold!"

And, turning upon his heel, he walked silently out, followed in like silence by the others.

On their return to town one of the party was dispatched to "The Jungle," and returned with the intelligence that although the bar was running, with the ever-smiling Duff behind it, the door of the gambling-saloon bore the inscription:

"PLAYED OUT!"

Then the detective sat drawing parallel lines, making them of the same length with the nicest exactness, as a man will give himself to some trivial occupation, when some elaborate and carefully-laid scheme has come to naught.

"Mr. Brewster," he said, in a quiet tone of voice, "everything is down. I must begin to build again from the bottom. The game is flown, and all the world is before me to find them in."

And Charley, thinking of the awful peril that threatened Florence in the time that must be lost, and of the impossibility of proving Fred's innocence, should he be found, said:

"God help her and him!"

CHAPTER V. A FIENDISH DEED.

We now return to pick up a thread of the warp of our fabric, which has for some time been running beneath the surface.

When Frederick Powell and Cecil Beaumont met on Dead Man's Bluff, the sense of deep injury in the breast of the latter broke forth in bitter accusation and invective. The hatred of the latter needed but a breath to fan it into a flame, and the two soon came to blows.

It chanced that neither was armed, Cecil having left his pistol at the bank; so that both were forced to rely upon their skill in pugilism. In this they were pretty well matched, and the conflict was of doubtful issue.

But, as they neared the verge of the precipice, Cecil tripped on a vine and fell backward, but at the same time struck Fred on the head with a stone, which he had picked up, bringing him insensible to the ground.

When Fred recovered his senses he crept to the verge and looked over, seeing where Cecil had clutched at the shrubs in his descent, pulling them out by the roots. Listening he heard nothing but the beating of the waves at the base of the bluff and the mournful sighing of the freshening wind in the tree-tops. Chilled with horror at the deed which he supposed himself guilty, he leaned out over the abyss and called in a terrified voice:

"Cecil! Cecil!"

All the animosity died out of his breast, at thought that his rival lay lifeless in the depths of Dead Man's Hole, hurled there by his hand.

With bated breath and heart stilled in his beating he waited and listened. But there was no sound save the sobbing of the waves and the sighing of the wind.

Then an awful horror seized him; an agony of fear turned the current of his blood to ice; and, staggering to his feet, he fled the accursed place.

But Cecil Beaumont was not dead. As he felt himself going over the escarpment he clutched at the roots, but they gave way, and with a dizzy sense of horror he felt himself going down, down, down as he supposed to death in the seething waters below. But suddenly he felt his fall arrested. Then, blinded by the dirt and stones that followed him, and half-insensible from the concussion, he found himself on a shelf of rock that ran along the face of the cliff.

Getting upon his feet, he made his way along the ledge until he reached a point where he could climb up the bank. He then started toward town, passing near the landing. At this point he suddenly came upon a group of men. Two were kneeling on either side of a prostrate man, searching his pockets, and the fifth was holding a dark lantern.

At Cecil's approach the ruffian dropped the lantern, and, leaping over the body, aimed a blow at Cecil with a club which he held in his hand.

"Hold up, McFarland!" cried the cashier, leaping aside; "you have nothing to fear from me."

The others had sprung up and surrounded Cecil with drawn knives.

"Who the devil be you?" demanded McFarland, suspiciously.

"You have dogged my footsteps enough to know me by this time," said Cecil, a little bitterly.

"Blowed if it ain't that bank sharp for

whom Tiger Dick has conceived such an affection of late," said a voice, which he recognized as belonging to Shadow Jim, though Cecil had never heard it before.

"Be the powers, but it's that same!" corroborated O'Toole.

"What air ye hangin' around here fur?" demanded McFarland, with surliness.

"That won't interest you. But you may have a looker-on in your little game, if you don't dispose of that body."

"What do you mean?"

"That there's a sport just up there on the bluff that may drop down on you at any moment."

"I'll take care of him," said Shadow Jim.

"Whistle when yer ready to start."

And he glided off toward the crown of the bluff.

"Whom have you got here?" asked Cecil, approaching the prostrate and motionless form.

"A flat as we've given the finishin' touch to. I'm afraid," said McFarland.

Again the lantern was turned upon his face.

"He is in disguise," said Cecil; and, stooping, he pulled a set of false whiskers from the man's face.

At the first glance he uttered a sharp cry and sprang backward, nearly overturning O'Toole. McFarland, too, uttered a cry.

He was of surprise simply, but Cecil had the ring of terror in it.

"Dog my cats, if he ain't jest the picter o' yerself, captain," said McFarland, gazing first at the man and then at Cecil in astonishment and wonder.

Trembling in every limb, Cecil Beaumont again drew near. But his face was as white and bloodless as that of the man lying motionless and apparently dead before him. There was in his eyes a wild glitter of horror and superstitious dread.

"Can it be he?" he whispered to himself, while McFarland and O'Toole looked on with mouth agape. Then, with a shudder: "Is he dead? See if he is dead. I dare not touch him," addressing McFarland, with chattering teeth.

The ruffian stooped down and unceremoniously thrust his hand beneath the vest of the prostrate man.

"Dead as a nit," he replied, without show of concern. "I hit him for keeps, you bet! Was he any relation o' yours?"

"No—no relation," said Cecil, but his tones and manner belied his words.

Then a sudden reaction took place. A sort of fierce satisfaction came into his face, as he said:

"Well, he's dead now, and not by my hand. He could have followed me for but one purpose. There is one less dog at my heels."

"He'll never trouble nobody after this," said McFarland.

"Let's pitch the spalpeen into the drink," suggested O'Toole. "He'll tell no tales thar-ur."

"That's the safest place fur him," assented McFarland. "Bear a hand, and in he goes!"

"Wait!" cried Cecil, breathlessly. "Does he look just like me? Look sharp, and see if there is any point of difference."

"As like as two buttons, only fur that scar on his lip," replied McFarland, after a critical comparison.

"Hair, eyes, everything," asked Cecil.

"Look close, for everything may depend upon some slight dissimilarity."

"Yer own mother wouldn't know ye apart, if you had a scar like his, or he was without," affirmed McFarland, positively.

"St. Pather himself wouldn't know t'other from which, if wan was a saint and the other a devil," corroborated O'Toole.

"Look here, men, you ain't either of you squeamish on little points, when there's money to be made!"

"Throy us on wanet!" cried O'Toole, with a wink.

McFarland scratched the palm of his hand significantly.

"If you will pound his face with that club until that scar cannot be detected, it will be ten dollars in each of your pockets."

McFarland grasped the club eagerly, and spitting on his hands, brandished it, but paused.

"And Shadow Jim!—we can't leave him out."

"Ten for him, too," said Cecil, drawing out his pocketbook.

"I'll mash him till his own mother wouldn't know him!" cried McFarland, and immediately began a rain of blows.

"Stop! stop!" cried Cecil, catching the arm of the too-zealous ruffian. "You will mutilate him beyond recognition. I don't want that."

"Oh, I see. You want him to be taken fur you? Well, that lay is too deep fur me."

"Never mind bothering your head about it. I'll tell you all I want you to know. Here's your money. And now pitch him into the water."

The ruffians took up the body between them, swung it back and forth two or three times, and then tossed it out over the dark waters of Dead Man's Hole.

There was a dull splash, the waters spurted aside and then closed again over the body, leaving high over the spot where it went down. Shuddering, Cecil Beaumont covered his face with his hands, to shut out the horrible sight.

There was a moment of awful suspense, and then there came to them on the wind a voice husky with terror.

"Cecil! Cecil!"

Cecil Beaumont reeled and fell to the ground, groveling at the roots of a tree. For one moment of agonizing fear he thought that the voice came from the body which had just sunk from sight. Then his reason prevailed over his superstition, and he found voice to ask:

"Did you hear it? Where did it come from?"

"Up the bluff," replied McFarland. "Shouldn't wonder if it came from the cuss what you spoke about. But he'd better keep mum, or Shadow Jim'll cut off his wind."

Then there was a sound of some one rushing madly through the bushes.

"Guess he's seen somethin' what skeered him," suggested McFarland, "and skeedaddled."

A moment afterward Shadow Jim glided in among them.

"What's the row?" asked McFarland.

"Who called?" asked Cecil, with a face as ghastly as that of a corpse.

"'Twas your friend," replied Shadow Jim.

"He looked over the bank and called, as if huntin' fer you. Then he got up and run like a white-head. Looked as if the devil and all his angels was after him."

"He thinks that he has murdered me. That's just what I want; and others must think so before to-morrow night."

"I don't jest twig you," said Shadow Jim, curiously.

"Never mind. Come on now, and I will explain when I have matured my plans. Here is ten dollars for you as compensation for a little service rendered by McFarland."

"Put it there, pard?" said Shadow Jim; and

he grasped Cecil's hand along with the money, and gave it a shake. "Plums don't often drop into a feller's mouth like that."

"Come on, or we will be caught in the storm. I have a boat here at the landing, and we can go in that. Throw that club into the bushes, where it can easily be found. And now come on, and I will unfold my plans as we go along. I have work for all of you."

They followed him to the landing, and leaping into the boat, dropped down-stream. Then came the storm, with its rush and fury, lashing the water into foam, and drenching them with rain and spray.

CHAPTER VI. A BLACK PLOT.

"CAN'T we get protection from the storm?" asked Cecil, as a blinding deluge of rain was blown into his face.

"There's a place a little further down the stream," said McFarland, tugging away at the oars; "but we'll be drowned rats afore we git there."

Five minutes' rowing brought them to the place, and the boat glided under a tree that hung over the river, supporting a mass of grape-vines, trailing to the very water. Here they found a comparative shelter.

"Take something to keep out the wet and cold, men," said Cecil, producing a flask.

"You're my mutton!" exclaimed McFarland, eagerly, snatching it from his hand and turning it bottom upward, with his lips glued to the mouth.

"Now, hog!" protested Shadow Jim; "remember that you ain't got the trough all to yourself."

"Be jabbers, but it looks loike it, at present!" exclaimed O'Toole; and added, trembling with anxiety: "For the love o' God, don't let him swally the whole bottle! Jest a drop o' the craythur, to wet the tip o' me tongue, and the blessed saints reward ye!"

Shadow Jim snatched the flask out of the hands of McFarland, who struggled to catch his breath after the long draught, all the time looking reproachfully at the interrupter of his bliss.

He in turn elevated the flagon, and with eyes closed in an ecstasy of enjoyment, let the liquor run down his throat.

O'Toole looked on a moment in constantly heightening solicitude; then, overcome, he burst forth:

"Howdy Mother! he'll suck the bottom out o' it! To waste the potheen on such a baste as a guzzler! Let up, let up, as ye hope fur remembrance in the day o' need!"

With both hands he seized the flask and sought to dispossess Shadow Jim. This sylvan in guzzling only opened his eyes and frowned at him deprecatingly and menacingly.

O'Toole, who stood somewhat in awe of Shadow Jim, drew back; but at last his love of the "craythur" made him desperate, and he snatched the flask and clapped it to his mouth in a twinkling.

Shadow Jim, who had gone off into a sort of trance, now came back to earth with a sigh, and glanced at O'Toole with a smile of malicious satisfaction.

A look of keen disappointment passed over O'Toole's face, and he removed the flask from his lips. He shook it, but no swish of liquid came forth. He gazed ruefully at it in the mouth, and said:

"Divil a drop! bad luck to yez fur a murdererin' that o' the worruld!"

And he returned the flagon to Cecil with a sorrowful shake of the head, while McFarland and Shadow Jim laughed at his discomfiture, in which Cecil was fain to join.

"And now, gents," said Cecil, "do you know of any good hiding-place, where a man could lie away for a week or two, without danger of discovery?"

"You're right, sport. We can tuck you away in our treasury, where you can snooze away until the day of judgment, and nary visitor will stick in his nose to ax the time o' day."

"Your treasury?"

"Where we stowed the spondulicks."

"The money taken from the bank?"

"That's what I said."

"And where is this place?"

"Down-river. On the Mississippi. We've got a snug little hole down there."

"And can you go to it to-night?"

"There's where we're bound for."

"The storm has slackened up. Let's be on the move."

"Narry move yet."

"And why?"

"Don't want to run my head into a sling, fur one."

"I don't understand you."

"We can't get by town without gettin' spied."

"I'll have to wait until the lights is off the river."

Cecil saw the force of McFarland's words, and they waited patiently where they were until after midnight. Then they dropped quietly down the river and into the Mississippi. Several miles from the confluence of the rivers the boat was brought to shore, and all departed.

A walk of half a mile, down a valley that set in at right angles with the river, brought them to a wild, rocky region, where the bluffs rose perpendicularly. Here McFarland led the way to a cave, whose entrance was hidden by vines that clambered up the face of the cliff.

Once within, they soon had a bright fire burning, and removing their clothes, hung them up to dry.

"And now," said Cecil, "tell me how you came across the stranger whom we left at Dead Man's Hole?"

"Well, boss," said Shadow Jim, "I guess that's as much as anybody's. I spotted that flat this afternoon, when we found that we needn't hunt our holes on account o' droppin' on the bank last night. I found out 'at he was stopping in an out-o'-the-way place, an' nobody knowed nothin' about him, exceptin' he called himself John Smith. I accidentally seen him pull a pocket-book pretty well lined with greenbacks, and thought there was as good for us as fur him. We shadded him out to the bluff to-night, expectin' to take the rocks out o' his pockets an' let him go. But Mack alters was an impetuous cuss; an' in poppin' him over, he hit him a lick what sent him to kingdom-come. An' that's the hul story."

Cecil shuddered.

"What's a man widout money, colleens?" asked O'Toole. "Bedad, he's out o' his throuble, an' will slape as swately in Did Man's Hole as at Widdy McCairty's."

"An' now what's your game, sport?" asked Shadow Jim of Cecil.

"Well, men, it must be pretty clear to you that I have no love for the man that knocked me over the bluff to-night, and came mighty near settin' my accounts. If the body of the man whom you pitched into the drink is found and taken for me, and the man with whom I

had the fight is convicted of murdering me and hanged, you'll admit that that will be some on the revenge."

"That's so, pard. But the kid is the son of a banker what's got the skads to pay, if we did lighten his coffers some. He can tickle the palms o' lawyers, and they'll muddle the whole thing up, until nobody can make head or tail of it. Then they'll let it lay over, till everybody has forgotten that you ever died. Then he'll light out o' the country. There won't be much satisfaction in that."

"But we mustn't let lawyers have anything to do with it."

"What's the trumps, pard?" asked Jim, meaning to indicate that he did not understand.

"When that thing's fished up with the face all stove in, there will be a lot that'll think it a pretty dirty job," said Cecil.

"That's so, old boss!"

"What would a crowd do with us, if they caught us, and knew that we did it?"

"They'd hang us up to dry, I reckon, with out any prayin' or palaverin'."

"It isn't any harder to hang a rich man than a poor one, is it? And such a crowd wouldn't care about his money."

"Jest whisper 'patent-leathers' to 'em, and every man 'ud want to have a holt o' the rope."

"That's just it," said Cecil, with a fiendish smile. "I am missed. Some one has seen me get into a boat. Search is made on the river, and my hat is found. It fell off of my head when I tumbled over the bluff. Then the spot where I came across you fellows is found. The rain won't have washed out the blood-stain, for the spot is sheltered by the trees. Foul play is suspected. Some one swears that he saw Fred Powell running away from the bluff, scared to death."

"Hold on, pard. You don't think I'm fool enough to run my head into such a sling as that, do you? Swear to nothin'! They'd ask me what I was doin' out there that time o' night."

"You're not the only man in the world that likes money, Mr. Jim. Don't you suppose I've got money enough to manufacture a witness; such a one, anyway, as will answer before Judge Lynch's court?"

"Oh! Now I begin to twig you," said Jim.

"My witness says that he saw Powell running away, and I gave him marks enough to show that he has been in a fight—"

"Better'n that, Cap. His hat's somewhere up there in the woods."

"How so?"

"He was bareheaded when I seen him skedaddlin'."

"That's capital! Oh, we've got him! His hat is found and identified. Then they find the body with the face pummeled to a jelly. Somebody makes a speech to the crowd. They go for Mr. Fred, and set him to dancing on nothing!"

"My dear Mr. Beaumont, that's a pretty high old plot, an' you're a pretty high old sharp. How long have you been in the business?" asked Shadow Jim, in admiration.

"Since before your eye-teeth were cut, my bantam!" said Cecil, impressively. "But that ain't all. Of course I don't want to live in retirement all the days of my life."

"Oh, they'll have you planted up in the bone-yard, you know," laughed Shadow Jim.

"Whurroo! an' he'll be all the day spoilin' potheen in some sly cor-ner, the divil!" cried O'Toole, enjoying the situation.

"How air you goin' to resurrect?" asked McFarland.

"Easy enough. He is hanged to-morrow. You take me a hundred miles or so down the river, and leave me bound and gagged near some farm-house. In the morning I am found. I lie sick and out of my head for two or three days from injuries received. Then I tell my story, which runs this wise: I was fighting with Powell and he knocked me over the bluff. I fetched up on the ledge, and walked until I came to the spot where I saw you fellows. There I saw two strapping big ruffians with bushy beards. (None of you are very big, nor have any of you full whiskers.) These kids have killed a man, and stove in his face with a club. Seeing that I have discovered them, they pop me over with a thwack on the head—and, Lord knows, I've got bumps enough to bear out this part of my story! The next thing I know I am bound and gagged, lying in the bottom of a boat. The sharps fly by night and hide during the day. When they get down the Mississippi they leave me bound and gagged and make off. I am exposed all night, and wake up in a fever."

"Who's going to find any fault with that? Powell is dead, but I couldn't prevent it. I don't know anything about it, you see, until, after I tell my story, the farmer tells me that a body was found supposed to be mine, and Powell was strung up by Judge Lynch. Of course, I'm awful sorry. If I did fight with him, I was a good friend to him for all that. Do you think that will wash?"

"Pard, I guess that'll wash! Let's see; is it first or second cousin to the devil that you claim to be?" asked Shadow Jim.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

Tom Wilson's Creek.

BY GEORGE W. BROWNE.

THE week following my escape from the stake was an eventful one to Max and me. We had many hard fights, and some narrow escapes from hostile Indians, in whose land we were sojourning. But as the adventures we had were similar to those experienced by others in like circumstances, I shall pass over them, to others more strange, and to the beautiful afternoon that found us on the bank of a mountain stream, which Max said was "Wilson's Creek."

We had ridden far that day, and as the sun was getting low we concluded to go no further. Just as we were going to dismount (I rode an Indian pony, then, in lieu of the horse that the savages had shot) we saw a smoke about a mile down the creek. As it curled lazily above the tree-tops, Max suggested that it might come from the camp-fire of some friendly trappers. Hoping that this might be the case, we decided to ride down and see.

Around the fire, in a half sitting posture, lazily smoking their pipes, we found four white men, three of whom, I saw at a glance, were old trappers. As

ON A STREET-CAR.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

When'er you wish to cut a spurge,
And come it very strong,
And for expenses do not care,
To show off to the throng,
Go take a horse-car; some advice
I'll give you in this song.

First, enter like a thunderbolt,
And give the door a slam,
The better you can show yourself
If there should be a jam;
Knock down the first man standing up
By giving him a ram.

Trip on the first foot that you meet
And fall across some knees,
Then balance to the other side
With far less grace than ease,
And tread upon somebody's corn
Which cannot fail to please.

Knock off that basketful of eggs
Upon the huckster's lap,
And break a female parasol
In reaching for the strap,
Apologizing to that man
For knocking off his cap.

And when you come to think that you
Have done it very brown,
And you have made the people think
You're active as a clown,
Select the very closest place,
And like a wedge sit down.

Let your stepladder lean against
The man upon your right,
That ash you're sure to have with you
Between your feet hold tight;
Be careful for that bunch of brooms
You brought in that night.

Now take your morning paper and
Unfold it full length out,
And let your elbows fly around
Not caring much about
Whether you take one on his head,
Or the other in the snout.

Squeeze for more room; that is your right;
At least if you are so young,
The pitchfork let your neighbor hold;
Troll out the latest song;
Wink at the girl that's opposite,
And gaily travel along.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life ;

OR,

Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

VIII.—George Frederick Cooke—His Great Talent and His Great Vice—His Monument—His Singular Device to Gratify His Thirst for Liquor—James Sheridan Knowles, the Celebrated Irish Dramatist—The Hunchback—The Wife—The Love Chase—Virginia and William Tell—His Appearance as an Actor—Characteristic Anecdotes of Him.

PRE-EMINENT among the stars who appeared upon the boards of "Old Drury," when it was in the zenith of its glory, was George Frederick Cooke, an actor whose fame extends over both hemispheres. England recognized and applauded his talent, and America was not slow in following her example.

Cooke's place of birth, after his death, was almost as much a matter of dispute as the great Grecian poet's, Homer. We are told:

"Seven cities claim him for their own,
Through which, when living, Homer begged his bread."

And so with Cooke. On the monument erected over his grave, by Edmund Kean, in St. Paul's churchyard, on Broadway, New York city, is this inscription:

"Three kingdoms claim his birth,
Both hemispheres proclaim his worth."

These three kingdoms were England, Scotland and Ireland; and to this day it has never been definitely settled in which one his eyes first saw the light.

This monument is still in existence, for Charles Kean caused it to be repaired in 1846, inscribing his name beneath his father's; and it was again repaired by Mr. E. A. Sothern, the celebrated "Lord Dundreary," in 1874.

Within the busy hum of the great thoroughfare of New York rest the remains of this great, but unfortunate, actor. Great in genius, but unfortunate in possessing an uncontrollable appetite for strong drink.

He was never to be depended upon, and while the managers of the theaters resorted to various devices to keep him sober for the evening's performance, he was equally cunning in counteracting their good intentions.

One instance will serve as an illustration: He had been locked in his room at the hotel, (he consented to the imprisonment with a good grace), and the manager with the key in his pocket felt confident that Cooke would not disappoint the public on this occasion.

When the time arrived that he should go to the theater the manager went in a carriage to the hotel for his star. He ascended the stairs that led to Cooke's room in a very pleasant frame of mind. He felt sure of his man this time. He inserted the key in the lock, opened the door, and entered, and to his great dismay and surprise found Cooke lying upon his back on the floor, in a drunken stupor, from which no efforts could arouse him in season for the night's performance.

How Cooke obtained the liquor, with which he had benumbed his senses, was a mystery, until he himself explained it. Hearing the footsteps of a servant of the hotel in the hall he had called to him through the keyhole. When the servant answered, his voice proclaimed his nationality. He was an Irishman. This was enough for Cooke, he also could be an Irishman, with the richest kind of a brogue, when it suited his purpose—and I have an idea that he really was a native of Ireland, for that country has been prolific in good actors.

He prevailed upon the servant to get him a bottle of whisky; but when the whisky was brought the drinking of it was a serious dilemma. The servant could not open the door, and Cooke knew it would be useless to send him to the office for the duplicate key, as the landlord was as much interested in keeping him sober as the manager was.

"Hould your mouth to the keyhole," suggested the servant; "you might get a mouthful that way."

But Cooke's imaginative brain suggested a better plan than this. He directed the servant to go to the nearest grocery store and get a new clay pipe, taking good care to keep the bottle of whisky concealed in his pocket while he did so.

The servant obtained the pipe, and then, following Cooke's directions, inserted the stem through the keyhole, to which Cooke applied his lips, and then poured the liquor into the bowl of the pipe, and in this way Cooke consumed its contents.

Having thus satisfied his insatiable thirst, he reeled from the door, to sink into a drunken slumber upon the carpet, and the servant hurried away with the empty bottle and the pipe. These insane indulgences consigned this talented man to an early grave. He abused the great gift of genius that Heaven had given him, and with the usual result. Whisky has been the bane of many promising actors.

There was another eccentric genius who ap-

peared at "Old Drury." This was James Sheridan Knowles. He was the author of several plays that are standard, and hold the stage side by side with Shakespeare's productions. He wrote "The Hunchback," "The Wife," "Virginius," "The Love Chase," "William Tell," "Alfred, the Great" and numerous other popular plays.

Like many authors, he thought he could act the principal characters in his plays better than the actors to whom they were intrusted, and he was, like the majority of them, mistaken. As a rule authors and critics, though they may teach other people to act, paradoxical as it may appear, cannot act themselves. There are exceptions, of course, (Dion Boucicault, for instance,) but, as in grammar, the exceptions only prove the rule.

Mr. Knowles essayed the character of "Master Walter, the Hunchback," in his play of that name, and after meeting with poor success in the old country was induced to try his fortunes in the new; but he found himself unappreciated in America.

His reputation as an author attracted audiences, but his acting was considered "queer;" and it was. He was a jolly-looking Irishman—of the parish priest pattern—with a rich brogue, and neither his figure, face nor voice, were at all suitable for the character of "Master Walter," who was supposed to be a high-toned gentleman, though somewhat brusque in manner, his disposition having been soured by his deformity.

Mr. Knowles resented this want of appreciation and commented upon it to the English and Irish friends he found in this country.

"Why don't you play Irish characters?" suggested one who had a keen eye for the fitness of things.

"Ah, me boy," replied Jimmy Knowles, (he always called himself "Jimmy"), shaking his head with owlish gravity: "I couldn't do that, you know, because I couldn't brogue them."

Just imagine this being said with the most mellifluous brogue, and then you will see where the laugh comes in.

Mr. Knowles returned to the old country, wrote some novels, by way of change, and one of them, "Fortesque," I read, and—well, I do not wish to read another one—and finally turned minister, in which calling he died.

Aunt Comfort's Joke.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

GRIM, stern, yet not unkind, Miss Comfort Baker looked frowningly down on Bessie's bowed head—a dainty-poised head, with its braids and flossy curls of palest gold.

"Well, it's too late for me to be making a fuss about it now, I suppose. You're married to him, and you've got to stick to your bargain, good or bad. Only, I must say, you aren't much like me, or you'd never been gulled by any man's nonsensical flatteries."

Which was very true. But Bessie never thought of intimating to aunt Comfort such a thing; she only lifted her sweet, blossom-like face, all aglow with eager enthusiasm.

"But you don't know how dearly Mark loves me, auntie; he—"

Aunt Comfort silenced her by a curl of her thin lips and a deprecating wave of her hand.

"I shan't listen to any such sickening nonsense; love is an obsolete thing nowadays. This husband of yours no doubt likes to look at your pretty face—most any man would, for you are pretty, Bessie, the very image of what I was at your age."

Bessie smiled, and blushed, and then a little indignant answer came to her lips.

"But he does love me; why—why, he has said so a thousand times; and you don't suppose my Mark could tell a lie?"

"I shouldn't wonder a bit if he could," she retorted, coolly; "but that's neither here nor there. What I was about to say was, it's what a man will do for his wife—that he is willing to sacrifice for her, if there needs be a sacrifice, that commends a man to me."

"Then you'll surely love Mark, auntie, because I know he loves me for myself alone—because, you know, he knows I have nothing."

The little wife was radiant at her own simple argument, and even aunt Comfort softened as she looked in her fair, pleading face, so full of love and pride.

"Then he doesn't know I intend giving you a house to live in—eh?"

Bessie's blue eyes opened in astonishment and delight.

"Auntie! do you really mean to be so good? Mark will—"

"Never mind Mark just now. All you've got to do will be to tell him I want to see him to-morrow morning; and you can go home to your other aunt who allowed you to marry him, for a day or so."

"Go away and leave Mark for a day or so! Oh, auntie!"

Miss Comfort smiled sourly.

"After existing twenty years without him, you are unable to endure a day's separation! Very well; I am not especially anxious to cultivate your husband's acquaintance, which I intended doing while you were away."

"Of course I'll go, auntie. Only—I'll be so lonely."

"Fiddlesticks!"

And after Bessie had returned to her boarding-house, where Mark Travis had taken her, a bride, a fortnight before, aunt Comfort sat and sewed, and smiled; then frowned, then sighed; then compressed her thin lips decidedly.

"I'll do it—sure as Fate. If he's good enough for our little sunshine, he'll come out triumphant; and if he isn't—Well, I don't suppose my test will hurt him."

A handsome, manly fellow, with a brave, frank face, whose dark gray eyes and blonde hair and beard succeeded in conveying to Miss Comfort a vague sort of idea that, perhaps, after all, Bessie was not so very much to blame for allowing herself to marry this graceful, easy, independent fellow, who bowed so cavalierly as he entered her parlors, and who proceeded to make him self very much at home.

"So this is aunt Comfort?"

He laughingly bent over her, and kissed her, his roguish eyes brimful of mischief as he saw the amazed flush surge over her face, and heard her fairly gasp in answer.

"Yes—I am Bessie's aunt Comfort, young man. Will you be seated, or stand, while I explain the reasons I have for sending for you?"

Mark bit his lip to keep from ha-ha-ing outright at her ungraciousness. He didn't know she was doing penance for admiring him.

"I think I'll be seated, if you have no objections, auntie; I am all attention to whatever you have to say."

Aunt Comfort gave him a searching, critical look as he sat there, in Bessie's favorite chair. Yes, he was handsome; but what if he was? That alone wouldn't make his wife happy. And he was gentlemanly and—yes—cer-

tainly very respectful to her. She sniffed a little, and scowled a little, to find she was actually warming to him; then, in another fit of self-contempt at her weakness, plunged into business details.

"So long as you're Bessie's husband, and it can't be helped, I suppose you ought to know what you've got to expect from me. I don't know whether she ever told you or not—but I always intended to give Bessie a home when she married. She's my namesake—only they called me Comfort instead of 'Elizabeth, and she only uses the capital C when she writes her name. And, besides, she's the speaking image of what I was at her age."

She said it half defiantly, as if she knew she deserved a contradiction. But Mark Travis was not the man to entertain such a thought; his thoughtful face betrayed only courteous attention.

"So, you see, I want you to see the place I've decided for Bessie's future home, providing she accepts one from me. It's plain—very plain—but good enough for poor folks. You have nothing, I suppose?"

Travis smiled.

"A salary of fifteen hundred, in a permanent position; five hundred in the bank to furnish our home, and—Bessie!"

He said it all so frankly, so proudly.

"Then you won't be disappointed at any lack of finery and style in the tenement I will give you."

She watched him narrowly, but he gave no sign, if he felt any disappointment. "A tenement" was not his ideal of a home for his bride, but then, they were just commencing, and how much better to begin at the lowest round of the ladder, and work gradually up. And this offer of aunt Comfort's was a kind one. It would save them rent, which, in New York, was no small item; and he knew wherever he was, Bessie would be content, and vice versa.

So, he really was very grateful as he thanked aunt Comfort, in quiet, many words, that she cut almost shortly, getting up, abruptly.

"Don't thank me—p'raps when you see it, you may change your mind. Have you an hour to spare? I'll take you to see it."

And they went out together, aunt Comfort actually embarrassed and half reluctant; Mark attentive, courteous, and more charmingly winning every minute; until, when they halted before a plain, big four-story brick tenement in Sixth avenue, aunt Comfort positively seemed undecided to enter, and she looked as if she had made some stupid mistake.

"Is this the place, aunt Comfort?"

He gazed inquiringly about him, with just a little thrill of disappointment.

"This is the place," she returned, briskly as ever.

"It isn't very elegant, as I told you, but it's clean and perfectly respectable. I own the house, and I'll answer for the people in it."

She conducted him up the stairs, through the first hall, and into the second tenement, a suite of five rooms, empty and dusty.

Mark threw a quick glance around him; a glance of terrible disappointment, as instantly followed by a feeling of shame that he was capable of such a feeling under the circumstances.

"I am a poor man, and Bessie knew it. We will be content to start as our parents before us; and I can brighten these, or any other rooms for my darling."

Aunt Comfort had seen the brief struggle in his face, and her shrewd eyes twinkled in actual delight for a second. Then she began to scowl.

"It's a gloomy sort of place, after all," she said; "I'd no idea it was so cheerless and grim."

"Because it's empty, only, I think. The ceilings are high, and the front view lively."

Mark spoke cheerily. This was to be his home, and a home he was determined to make it.

"Well, I declare! just as if I ever expected the sink was right out in the kitchen! What on earth did the fool of a builder mean not to put a closet around it?"

Mark followed the shrill voice into the little sunny kitchen.

Oh, never mind that. Bessie'll fix up a curtain on the wall over it, and a coat of yellow ochre will improve it vastly. What a good place for Bessie's flowers—a rare, sunny exposure."

He was out in the little rear hall, with its one window, whither aunt Comfort followed him.

"I should think it was sunny—enough to roast one in July," he returned, pleasantly.

"I think not," he returned, pleasantly.

"With the green shutters closed, and a cool lace curtain, it won't be so bad. Besides, there is a good draft through."

Aunt Comfort watched him closely, as he went back to the front room again.

"Really, this room improves. See—this corner for Bessie's sewing-machine and chair; this panel for her little writing-desk; this alcove for the sofa; and this for my aquarian, auntie—we will be very cosy and content, and we have you to thank."

Aunt Comfort compressed her lips, as if she was on the very verge of saying something unnecessary. Then they went away again, after Mark had insisted on taking the measure for carpets.

"I must say good-by for this time, now," he said, as they reached her door. "I will be needed at the office."

"Come to-morrow at three, and bring Bessie—and don't get your carpets cut. I want to go with you when you select them."

And as Mark went away, she went in, chuckling in unshared glee.

"He's passed the ordeal! He's a man, every inch of him, and I believe Bessie's a wiser woman than ever I was. He's a fine fellow, and when I say that much, why—that's all that need be said."

An exquisite little phaeton, lined with olive-brown satin, and delightfully comfortable for Bessie Travis and aunt Comfort on the front seat, and Mark behind them with the reins in his masterful hands.

The saucy, yet well-behaved ponies, matched to a hair, and as black as jet, trotted on as if vastly contented with their silver-plated harness, and the three people who were enjoying the ride, aunt Comfort insisted on giving them, were all in first-rate spirits.

"I am so afraid you have gone to too much trouble, auntie, although it is kind to give us such a treat. We expected to walk or take the cars to see our new home."

Bessie looked very fair and sweet, as she spoke to the grim, quiet woman at her side, who seemed in a state of constantly suppressed excitement.

"I don't want to hear another word about it. I asked you and your husband to take a ride, and we're taking it. I told him to drive home over this road, and he's doing it. I don't see any reason for talking about it. Drive slowly past this next house, if you please, sir. A friend of mine lives there, and possibly I shall call."

Every word was delivered as if in anger. Every inflection of the voice was wrathful—and yet, despite aunt Comfort's desperate efforts to preserve her dignified indifference, her faded, shrewd eyes were lighted with keen delight and expectancy.

As Mark pulled on the reins, and the ponies fell into a walk, Bessie looked at the elegant little villa, standing among shade-trees and flowers.

"Oh, isn't it sweet? Is it here your friend lives, auntie?"

"I believe so—if I ain't mistaken. I've a notion to call—do you want to go in? Just a minute."

Of course Bessie would go in, and so Mark tied the ponies, and escorted the ladies into the house, at the door of which an elderly woman respectfully saluted them, and showed them into the charming little parlor—a perfect marvel of bay-windows, mirrors, elegant furniture and works of art.

Then, after waiting several minutes, the woman appeared again.

"If you would be so kind as to wait upon missus up-stairs—she begs to be excused from coming down, as—"

When, right in the midst of the grave invitation, aunt Comfort began to laugh; until the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Oh, Hagar! Hagar! that will do! You've done it admirably—but don't do it any more! Go get dinner ready, while I take these children through their house."

Bessie stared wide-eyed, with paling face; Mark gazed in undisguised amazement; and aunt Comfort laughed till she shook.

"I don't suppose you'll refuse it—eh, Bessie? nor the ponies, nor the phaeton? and you, Mark, my nephew, prefer it to the 'rooms' on Sixth avenue? Take it, and welcome—both of you. I've proved you deserve it—and there's no more to be said. Come—let's go through."

But Bessie's clinging arms around her neck effectually prevented her.

"Oh, aunt Com—"

"Not a word! Mark, will you make her behave! Now, Bessie, once for all, I have this much to say: that I have proved your husband in my own way. I have found him willing to accept a small favor, and determined to make the very best of the worst. I know he intends to make you happy—and here, in this place, see to it you do your best to please him. Not a word now! It was my own joke, and not a poor one. Come, children, let's look through."

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